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NOTES

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WE TALK TO

**BEYONCÉ'S
STYLIST**
TY HUNTER

BEHIND-THE-SCENES

**AT ELLE
RISING STAR**

IN ASSOCIATION
WITH MRP

AMBER
HEARD

ON JOHNNY DEPP

'I FALL IN LOVE
AGAIN AND
AGAIN'

LIPSTICK
FIND
THE
RIGHT
SHADE
OF
RED

SUMMER SHOPPING

HOLIDAY
HIT LIST

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AND
ACCESSORISE
FOR THE
PARTY**



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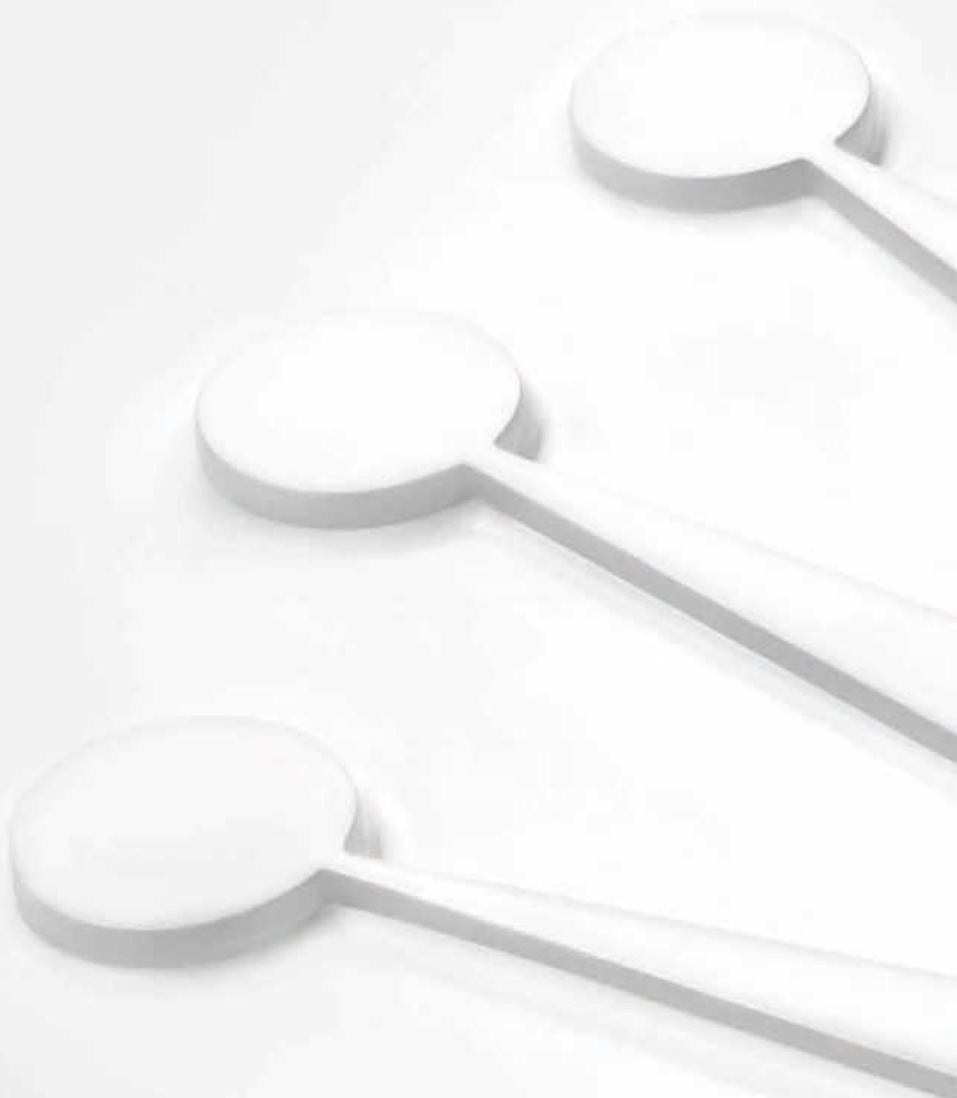
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ELLE

DECEMBER 2015

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coastal cruising

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ON THE COVER

Amber Heard photographed by Liz Collins; styling: Samira Nasr; hair: Teddy Charles; make-up: Lisa Houghton at Tim Howard Management; manicure: Gina Edwards at Kate Ryan Inc.; prop styling: Viki Rutsch at Exposure NY; production: Wei-Hi Wang at Brachfield NY; fashion assistant: Yashua Simmon; Amber wears embroidered silk dress, Altuzarra; aquamarine, ceramic, and rose gold earrings, James de Givenchy for Taffin; silver-plated gold, enamel, and diamond rings, Fred Leighton





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ALL ABOUT ELLE & YOU



Dear You,

December.

That euphoria-inducing sensing of vacation coming; the anticipation of the new year; the sun's lingering kiss after a day at the beach; the many attempts to disconnect (while not always being very successful at it). The last month of 2015 has finally arrived.

Every year, when December comes, I look back at the year that was: it's a bit like opening an album of recent pictures, memories of a not-so-far-away past. I page through the images of cover shoots, symposiums, trips, escapades, hiccups, I play back the film of 2015, or at least the things that remained on my mind all these months later: a million pieces of us scattered throughout the year, building a mosaic of the year that was.

So last December, before we all went on holiday, I emailed the team about the big year ahead of us. I said:

'In 2015, we will keep venturing into this new world, where digital and print meet, where our online daily digital publication is always as important as our monthly magazine. We will explore new ideas and

strengthen our core: an intelligent, inspiring read with magnificent aesthetics. We will laugh, discuss and debate.

We will invent, create and reshape.

We will embrace the adventure, we will try and we will make things happen.

We will never compromise but we will always do it with care and kindness.

We will keep writing, photographing and drawing, knowing that once the pen is down, the laptop shut and the lights are off, we couldn't have done it better.'

In 2015, we have shot six local covers, starting with twins Suzane and Suzana for our Sisterhood issue, and every time, it was as much falling in love with the cover stars than having the opportunity to create a visual that would fit the theme of the issue, while telling a story of our own. We have launched ELLE Boss, to recognise the talent and audacity of female business leaders and entrepreneurs. We featured the remarkable work of upcoming designers, prominent artists and influencers. We have travelled to Paris and brought back not only the tale of our adventures but a cover shoot with international fashion influencer and blogger Kristina Bazan, whose followers number in millions. We have shared with you stories that bare the beauty of South Africa and the rest of the continent; we have engaged on all our platforms, sometimes with mixed results, and we have learned from and listened to you.

But there is so much more ground for us to cover, speak about, voice, share and do it ever better. There is so much more we can and will do, from covering important issues to reporting from fashion weeks' front row, from inviting you to experience our shoots live to bringing you more fun and fabulous events.

We are ready: our pencils will be sharp, our ink will be wet and our ideas lined up. Happy holidays, see you in 2016!

Emilie

TALK TO ME

@emiliegambade

@EmilieGambade



FLOWERBOMB

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

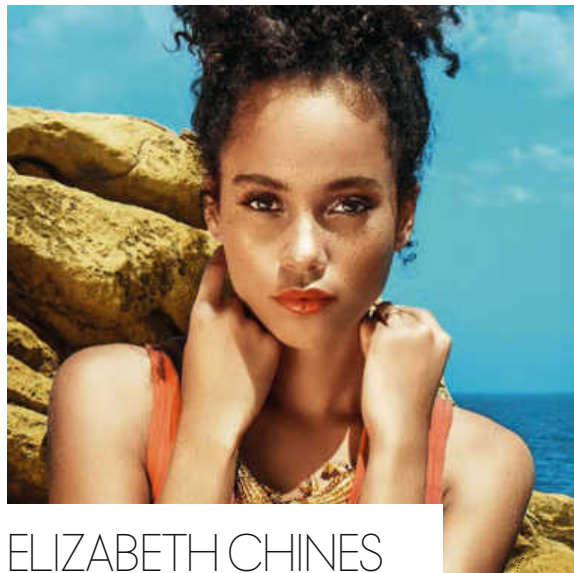


THE FIRST PERFUME BY

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CREATIVE SPACE

Welcome to ELLE's December issue, where we are celebrating luxury with a difference. Forget the price tag, luxury is all about that feeling of contentment you get from time spent with your loved ones, your favourite lipstick or that treasured scent. We asked two of our contributors to reflect on what luxury means to them



ELIZABETH CHINES
CRUZ D'ALMEIDA

'I'm Africa and America, I'm Afro and freckles. I'm always smiling, life's fun, I'm google and giggles... Single? I'm forever not alone, self-love, all is love and be loved in return, that's my number one rule. Geology, music, yoga, these are my other favourite things,' says Elizabeth Chines Cruz D'Almeida, who worked on our Top Notes editorial.

@elizty

@elielikitty

MY LIFE RIGHT NOW is blessed and holistic.

IN ANOTHER LIFE I would probably be Isis, the ancient Egyptian goddess.

LUXURY IS sleeping with a clear conscience, a happy heart, and a fully inspired soul. Education changes the world, and I consider that to be a luxurious feeling too.

MY MOST TREASURED MEMORY is of my mother's smile, which continuously brings to light the meaning of life.

MY MOST TREASURED ITEM IS love... I cannot get enough of it.

MY ULTIMATE INDULGENCE would be to accomplish all my philanthropic goals. There's nothing more gratifying or indulgent in life than to see those you love free and happy. So, like Nelson Mandela said: 'Man's goodness is a flame that can be hidden but never extinguished.'

NEXT ON MY TO-DO LIST IS to eat chocolate and pray and love like Julia Roberts, and laugh with Kevin Hart. Other than that, I hope to inspire aspiring models by opening doors for them through hard work, dedication, self-love and realisation. Life is really short, so say to yourself, I'm worthy, I'm happy, you can't tell me no, because, yes, I can be who I want to be...Kanye West, Hillary Clinton, Oprah Winfrey, I can be Eli, I can be me! □



SEBASTINE PEPLER

Sebastine doesn't consider make-up as her job. 'It's my passion. It lives very closely in my heart with my family, friends, boyfriend, and love for the outdoors,' she says. She also notes that there is nothing glamorous about her job. 'Whoever said so, was lying!' When she is not painting faces, she is climbing mountains, travelling or chilling with her cat. 'My boyfriend and I have an imaginary dog called Shackleton. He is great,' she laughs. Grounded and very passionate, see Sebastine's passion come to life in our Top Notes editorial.

MY LIFE RIGHT NOW is freaking amazing!

IN ANOTHER LIFE I would probably be living on a mountain somewhere. A stone cottage near a river with no electricity, my own veggie garden, and a massive fireplace.

LUXURY IS taking a shower under a waterfall in a remote area in the hills on a warm summer's hike...followed by an ice-cold beer (of course!).

MY MOST TREASURED MEMORY is of hiking the Camino Santiago with my mother, and sipping cocktails on the beach in Monaco.

MY MOST TREASURED ITEMS ARE a ring my boyfriend had made for me as a birthday gift, which I never take off, and leather ankle boots my mum bought for me in Amsterdam.

MY ULTIMATE INDULGENCE would be travelling the world and exploring food, wine, culture and the outdoors with some good mates.

NEXT ON MY TO-DO LIST IS getting through all my emails in my inbox, and then take over the world!

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WORLD'S LEADING FASHION MAGAZINE - 46 INTERNATIONAL EDITIONS

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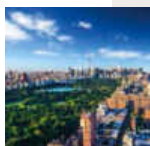
Actress Amber Heard



girlfriend before marrying
Johnny Depp



when she dropped out of high
school to pursue a modelling
career in New York



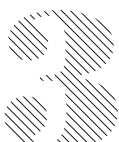
music video appearances (Kenny Chesney's
There Goes My Life and Easley's
I Wasn't Prepared)



of Amber's recreational sports include
horseback riding, rock climbing, diving,
golf, tennis, and swimming



Yorkshire Terriers she shares
with hubby Johnny Depp



films under her belt and counting



Amber Heard is on our cover this month and there are many reasons why: also known as Mrs Johnny Depp, she is first and foremost an independent woman who loves and protects her freedom; she is also a versatile actress who can go from a martial arts movie, *Never Back Down*, to an action comedy, *Machete Kills*, all the way to a tangled love story (opposite husband Depp) *The Rum Diary*; in short, she dares to try and when she tries, she does it best. We also love that she refuses to be put in a 'Barbie box,' and like pretty much all of us, she has her own battles to fight for: 'I feel like I'm constantly fighting against my exterior, or this exterior presentation of myself because of how I look or perhaps because of who I'm with.' The 29-year old Texas native also publicly declared her bisexuality at a GLAAD event in 2010, and five years later married 52-year old Depp on the actor's own private island. We couldn't find anyone else to better encompass the free spirit of summer and December. Read her story on page 66, she shares it all (almost) with us!

— Emilie Gambade

*Based on US home use consumer test on 62 women aged 25-59 after 8 weeks.
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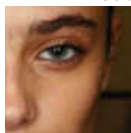
@ELLEMAGAZINESA CALENDAR

25

November: The finalists of the #ELLERisingStar Design Award in association with MRP will show their collections at the #ELLERisingStar Design Award ceremony in Hyde Park – be sure to follow us on Twitter for live updates!

7

December: ELLE Beauty School eyebrow masterclass vlog with Beauty Editor Nicole Newman on ELLE.co.za



December: Live Twitter chat with Fashion Director Tarryn Oppel on what's hot this summer. Ask her questions at

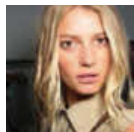
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15

December: ELLE Beauty School step-by-step tutorial on how to perfect wavy hair with Beauty Editor Nicole Newman on ELLE.co.za – ask Nicole beauty questions at

@ELLEMAGAZINESA



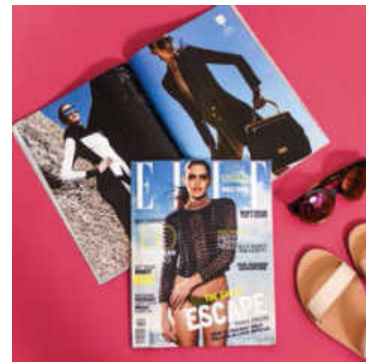
28

December: January/February 2016 issue goes on sale (Happy New Year!)



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Be creative, have fun! Tweet or Instagram us your #ELLESelfie featuring our December issue and we'll publish the best image on ELLE.co.za. Remember to include @ELLEMAGAZINESA #ELLESelfie



#INSTACRUSH

She was born and bred in South Africa, but now spends her time living the luxe life in Australia. Her pictures are crisp, vibrant and styled to perfection. Meet our December Instacrush, Li-Chi Pan

ELLE: Who is @lichipan?

I am a 23-year-old recent Masters of Architecture and Design graduate from the University of Sydney, born and bred in South Africa. I'm currently working as a content editor for MAXMEDIALAB, Australia's leading luxury agency, and I enjoy showcasing personal works as a photographer and stylist on Instagram and my blog.

ELLE: How long have you been on Instagram?
For just under two years.

ELLE: Your Instagram style?
Minimal and white.

ELLE: What inspired this Instagram account?
When I initially started out I used my Instagram account as a platform to document my everyday life to stay in touch with my family and high school friends in South Africa. Studying architecture and design inspired me to create a grid filled with beautiful imagery. It also helped mould my aesthetics and gave me a keen eye for composition.

ELLE: Top three people to follow on Instagram?
@thehautepursuit, @ncik, @kessara

TWEET > INSTAGRAM > @ELLEMAGAZINESA > YOU TELL US

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OR EYESHADOW *in our
January/February
issue*

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OUR EDIT OF THIS SEASON'S HOTTEST FASHION AND BEAUTY TRENDS

ELLE RADAR



ALL THAT GLITTERS

ALBERTA FERRETTI

Golden-hues and stardust inspired accessories from Alberta Ferretti's SS16 collection are the little gems that make this world go round...

TRENDS

ACCESSORIES

From New York to Milan, London and Paris, here are the stand-out trends from the SS16 runways



MARA HOFFMAN: Silver cuff and ring combinations

HEAVY METAL

BALMAIN: Chunky, bold neckpieces



OPTICAL ILLUSION

MILA SCHÖN: Mirrored Matrix-inspired



FENDI: Exaggerated vintage cat

OPENING CEREMONY: Architecturally s



NICHOLAS KIRKWOOD: Arm-long gladiator cuffs
GIVENCHY: Bejewelled face masks




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BAG DEAL

JEREMY SCOTT: Retro television set bag
MAX MARA: Drawstring with seagull motifs
VICTOR RHODES: Leather moon bag

HEAD GEAR

DOLCE & GABBANA: Tropical turbans

MARA HOFFMAN: Pastel headbands

ASHLEY WILLIAMS: Where's Wally? inspired beanies



THE CHOKER

OHNE TITEL: Beaded



MARY KATRANTZOU: Narrow in black



GIORGIO ARMANI: Red with large button detailing



GO ONLINE
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 trends report from
 SA Fashion Week
 AW16 shows

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES; COMPILED BY NTOMBENHLE SHEZI



GUESS



ZANDI TISANI, STYLIST AND TELEVISION WRITER

Great fashion photography is a sign of the times, and that's how I feel about the collaboration between photographer Kristen-Lee Moolman, Rich Mnisi and Gabrielle Kannemeyer for Oath's SS16 shoot. The politics of sexual identity took centre stage, the Black Lives Matter movement brought black pride to the mainstream, and this shoot expresses this moment perfectly: the androgynous models, and the humble home in Soweto working to serve the most important feature: the clothes.

REWIND

2015

FASHION MOMENTS

As the year comes to a close, we invited style lovers to share their most memorable fashion moments



LONDIWE MBHELE, iFASHION EDITOR

My moment is how genderless fashion shot up with its refreshingly spacious silhouette. I love easy movement in clothing, and knowing that I can shop for whatever, whether it's wide turn-up trousers, tunics, or oversized shirts, because it's so inclusive. Also, South African designers such as Chu Suwannapha and Rich Mnisi gave a very artistic interpretation of audacious styles, which are also referred to as street. I love the messages surrounding fashion, where designs are a reflection of the current culture, which serves as a great impulse to buy - so timeously with the rising of gender activism.



FANI SEGERMAN, STYLIST AND MODEL

My biggest fashion moment was the release of Manthe Ribane's song and video with Okzharph, *Dear Ribane*. A creative force, she has finally merged all her skills to create this visual delight. Ribane has crafted her style - a mix of vintage, traditional, modern, street wear and Afropunk - perfectly, and has incorporated her incredible voguing skills and voice to create this video, which is most definitely only the start of something phenomenal. It's a revolutionary first for South Africa!



paco rabanne

The new fragrance for her



@gabriellekannemeyer

@Gabbikannemeyer

GABRIELLE KANNEMEYER, ART DIRECTOR AND STYLIST

What a year it has been... Rich Mnisi reintroducing his brand by attaching his name to it was incredible. Helen Jennings and Sarah Hemming founding the fashion, arts and culture platform, Nataal, and Rick Owens' show at Paris Fashion Week, using the concept of the human backpack as an ode to women and their strength. What's inspiring me the most is the movement that is currently happening around the world within the industry - the empowerment of people of colour and gender fluidity by the designers mentioned above and others, like Orange Culture, Kenneth Ize and Grace Wales Bonner. What a time to be alive!



2015

FASHION MOMENTS



@Dimejialara

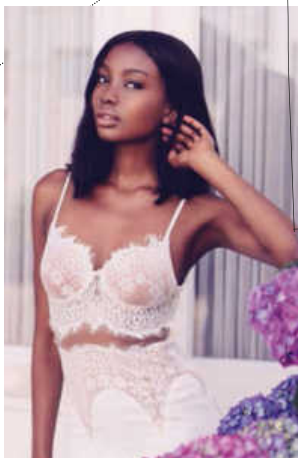
DIMEJI ALARA, CONTRIBUTOR ELLE MAGAZINE

John Galliano's return, for sure! When he showed his inaugural collection for Maison Margiela during Paris Haute Couture Fashion Week in January. Galliano remains one of the most talented designers alive, and no one wants to see such talent go to waste. Some didn't think he deserved a second chance, but I did. That moment for me was everything!



NATASHA NDLOVU, LONDON-BASED BLOGGER

Caitlyn Jenner's big reveal in the July issue of *Vanity Fair*. For an individual who is already well known, Jenner's immediate introduction using that publication, wearing those designer clothes, was powerful. Yes, the focus was about her transition - a topic that still divides many, more so than her fashion sense - but at the same time, it piqued our interest and how something so sensitive could become inspirational. □



@natashandlovu

PHOTOGRAPHY: GALLO / GETTY IMAGES / SUPPLIED / TRAVIS OWEN / ANNA SANDUL / CHRIS SAUNDERS FOR THE OKZARP. DEAR RIBANE (HYPERDUB 2015) MUSIC VIDEO RELEASE / KRISTIN-LEE MOUJAN / PHIL ENGELHARDT / SIMPHIVE MKHWANAZI / COMPILED BY NTOMBENHIE SHEZI



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PEOPLE'S SHOES OF ITALY



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GO ONLINE
to see the timeline of
the Burberry trench

*A style staple and an international icon of
the brand's heritage, the Burberry trench coat
has been turning heads since the 19th century*



FROM THE #ELLEFASHION CUPBOARD

BURBERRY



Trench coat, R24 490, Burberry



ALDO

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Designer and fashion director *Chu Suwannapha's* turning point was his print-inspired debut collection at *SA Menswear Fashion Week* earlier this year. Fondly dubbed the *prince of prints*, *Ntombenhle Shezi* gets to know him

CHU SUWANNAPHA

EARLY FASHION MEMORIES

Growing up in Bangkok, Thailand, my mother and my sisters inspired my love for fashion. Their style was distinctly '60s in textured shift dresses, sometimes in silk with delicate embroidery, cropped Chanel jackets, big dramatic eyeliner and blue eyeshadow. My mum went to the salon every day, and I have vivid memories of her big hairstyles and the hairspray used.



FROM PARIS TO CAPE TOWN

I came to Cape Town 14 years ago for personal reasons. Before that I lived and studied fashion design at Esmod Paris. Living in Paris as an emerging designer was tough, but interesting and inspiring. It is where I got the opportunity to perfect my craft. When I arrived in Cape Town I had no money or support system but I wanted to make a contribution to the fashion industry, and used my designing background to work as a stylist. I had no idea what South Africa would be like before I came here, but the diversity of the people and the arts and culture really inspired me. Funny to think that while living in Paris I wore black, and South Africa inspired my bold style.

ON HIS WORK

I am still really surprised at the response that my debut collection received. The show was a big deal for me. Next up is my winter 2016 collection, which I will show at SA Menswear Fashion Week in February. I cannot reveal too much about the range but I always want to celebrate Africa through my work as a sign of gratitude for having me and giving me these opportunities. I am also working on a collaboration with an interior design shop on a wallpaper range, which will be revealed soon.

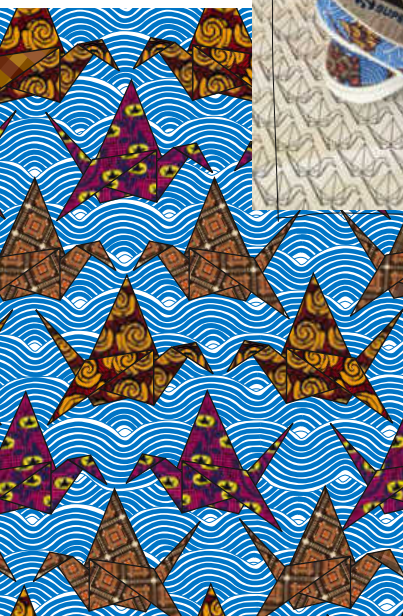
Twitter: @ChuSuwannapha

Instagram: @chusuwannapha



THE SUPERGA COLLABORATION

When I think about the Superga shoe I think about a blank canvas. I designed three different styles; the first is inspired by Japanese Origami, with a texture reminiscent of the waves of the Indian Ocean; the second takes its lead from Ndebele print, which is bold, Afro-pop and reminds me of a jigsaw puzzle; and the third is inspired by neckpieces worn by Masai warriors with a monochromatic feel. □



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for Chu's style diary



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PRIVATE
VIEWS

On 22 September the judges of the 2015 ELLE Rising Star Design Award in association with MRP met for the second round of judging. *Emilie Gambade* takes us behind

the scenes



On the ground floor of an old church converted into a photographic studio, behind a sliding wooden door, a squad of young women are placing garments on a rail. With care and curiosity, they unwrap, hang and steam the clothes, one by one; two designers per rail, four rails in total, their ballet slowly colours the space in a rainbow of shades and textures.

As I walk into the massive room, my fellow judges, trend director at MRP, Joanne Frédéric and Amber Jones, MRP trend executive, Anita Stanbury, executive director of the South African National Fashion Council, Caileigh Davis from African Fashion International, and ELLE fashion director Tarryn Oppel are already preparing for the session, paging through the moodboards that were e-mailed a few weeks prior to the event. Laduma Ngxokolo and Dimeji Alara, both in Milan, will give their vote a few days later.



The excitement is palpable: picturing a collection based on one's moodboard, vision and storytelling is one thing; seeing it coming 'live' on a model is another. The gap is wide between 2D sketches painted in colours that will ultimately pop differently in real life than on a computer screen, and tangible clothes that need to fit one's body, move with it and fall in the right place. Talent, creativity, strong design skills and a distinct flair for what will soon be in the air is required, as well as a clear understanding of garment construction and textile handling.

This year again, the competition was fierce and as the number of applications almost doubled (from 85 in 2014 to 155, with Gauteng entries jumping from 23 to 46), so did the variety in visions, storytelling, and, of course, collections presented. After the first round of judging, eight finalists were selected.

For this round of judging, only four garments needed to be fully completed while the rest (another four silhouettes) were still a work-in-progress; it would take more time and efforts before they can make it to the final show. Iconic editor and 'empress of fashion' Diana Vreeland once said that 'the eye has to travel'; throughout the day, thanks to the creative knack of the young designers behind the collections, we travelled from the comfort of loungewear or knitted shorts paired with tulle tops with embroidered flowers, to the eccentricity of satin bows clashing with exaggerated epaulettes, billowing sleeves and tight corsets. It was a festival of personalities: here a free-spirited woman à la Anna Piaggi circa 2010; there,



an independent, edgier, rock-meets-goth woman dressed in deep black and floor-length sleeves. Here the softness and charm of a girl ready to lounge; there, the pop-ness of a modern cheerleader.

While we were seduced by the audacity of some of the ranges and the explosion of colours and textures of the others, it was the overall construction, the translation of the sketches into reality, the attention to detail and, of course, the originality and uniqueness of one's collection that finally drove our choices.

The focus of the competition has always been and will remain on youth development; our hope is to empower fashion design students and celebrate their talent, energy and uniqueness. After a day of deliberations, we selected six finalists who, we thought, embodied that spirit; together, they will participate in the final show, which will see the crowning of this year's winner. Cara Geach, Daisie Jo Grobler, Bianca Messina, Siyabonga Ntini, Blünke Janse van Rensburg and Hamza Guelmouss will all be presenting their collections on 25 November, in Johannesburg's Hyde Park Corner.

As the lights dimmed and the studio was embraced by darkness, the garments, waiting to be couriered back to their designers, hung on the rails like frail silhouettes. As we were stepping back into the real world, they reminded us of the stories they tell: between the lines, the stitches, the hesitations, they offered words of hope and conviction, of hard work and determination. And while there will only be one winner, there is no doubt that, this year again, there will be many beautiful tales to tell and savour.



'PICTURING A COLLECTION BASED ON ONE'S MOODBOARD, VISION AND STORYTELLING IS ONE THING; SEEING IT COMING "LIVE" ON A MODEL IS ANOTHER'





HAMZA GUELMOUSS

MY COLLECTION IS ABOUT GOING AGAINST THE IDEALS OF BEAUTY.
THE WOMAN I AM TARGETING IS INDEPENDENT, EDGY AND NOT AFRAID
TO NOT CONFORM TO FASHION RULES.



BLÜNKE JANSE VAN RENSBURG

WHAT MATTERS MOST IS MAKING CLOTHES. IF I HAD A
MILLION DOLLARS I WOULD MOST PROBABLY SPEND ALL
OF IT ON FABRIC.



BIANCA MESSINA

I HAVE LEARNT TO LOVE FASHION NOT ONLY FOR ITS CONSTANTLY CHANGING
TRENDS, BUT ITS CRAFTSMANSHIP, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATIVE DESIGNS.



NAOMIE HARRIS

By reprising her role as Miss Money Penny, in the latest Bond franchise, *Spectre*, **Naomie Harris** is cementing her status as a bona fide *Hollywood star*, says **Tidi Benbenisti**

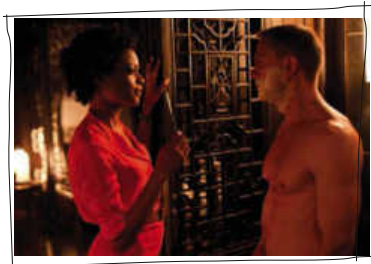


For Naomie Harris acting was always the plan. Sometimes you just know, she told ELLE USA. And it's that innate sense of purpose, determination and faith that has helped propel her career to greater heights. Being the first black woman to bring doe-eyed Miss Moneypenny to the big screen, and giving her a 2.0 look and appeal, is perhaps far removed from Ian Fleming's original take on the character, but Harris is proof that time doesn't stand still, not even for the 007 mega franchise.

The character, previously portrayed in three Bond films, was always secondary to hardline M, bow-tied 007, and the ever-sexy Bond Girl (who traditionally always dies), but when Harris debuted as Eve Moneypenny in *Skyfall* in 2012 she did so with a bang. It was unpredictable, powerful and refreshing, albeit a little testy as Eve moves away from the traditional desk job as secretary and goes into the field, (mistakenly) targets and shoots 007, is temporarily suspended, but returns triumphantly alongside Bond.

Did she ever aspire to play M's secretary, that same woman who's been crushing on Bond but with whom, as far as we know, nothing will ever happen? Not necessarily, as Harris says there was not one particular film that triggered her acting passion. Instead, she mastered the artform, inhabited characters, and is reaping those rewards now.

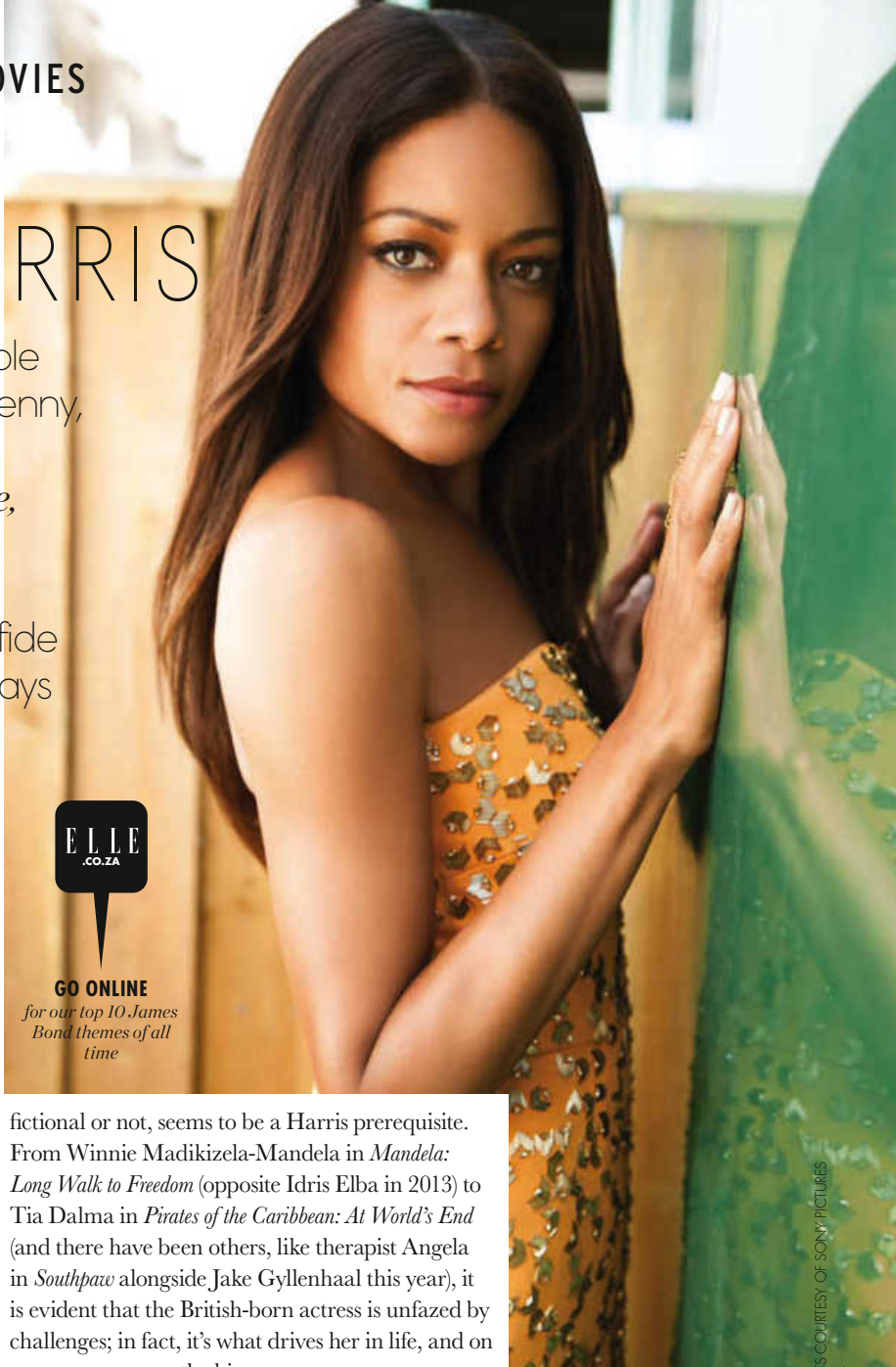
But before Miss Money Penny there were other roles that shone a light on the 39-year-old Cambridge graduate's acting skills. Bringing unconventional, complex characters to life, whether



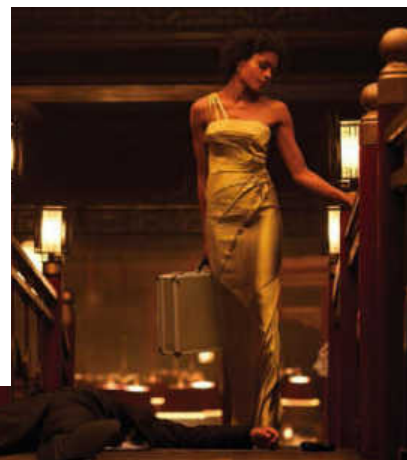
fictional or not, seems to be a Harris prerequisite. From Winnie Madikizela-Mandela in *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* (opposite Idris Elba in 2013) to Tia Dalma in *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End* (and there have been others, like therapist Angela in *Southpaw* alongside Jake Gyllenhaal this year), it is evident that the British-born actress is unfazed by challenges; in fact, it's what drives her in life, and on the big screen.

Growing up, Harris was no stranger to life's many complexities; raised singlehandedly by her mum, she started acting at the tender age of nine; her résumé also includes *28 Days Later* and *Frankenstein* (in Danny Boyle's National Theatre Live production in 2011, with Benedict Cumberbatch).

sharing the stage with Benedict Cumberbatch). The latter was a production she wasn't particularly comfortable with but it served as a turning point, because that's where acclaimed director Sam Mendes saw her and quickly cast her as Eve Moneypenny in *Skyfall*, and the rest is, as we are currently watching, history in the making. □



PHOTOGRAPHY: CLIFF WATTS COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES



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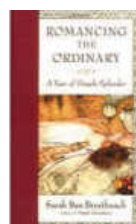
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CHANGED MY LIFE

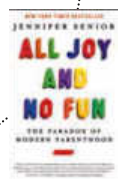
NICKY GREENWALL

This month, entertainment journalist and television producer, Nicky Greenwall talks to us about the book that's had a lasting impression on her



ALSO ON MY SHORT LIST...

How to Win Friends and Influence People - Dale Carnegie; *Women, Work and the Art of the Savoir Faire* - Mireille Guiliano; *Wherever You Go There You Are* - Jan Kabat-Zinn; *Overwhelmed: Work, Love and Play When No One Has the Time* - Brigid Schulte; *All Joy and No Fun: The Paradox of Modern Parenthood* - Jennifer Senior



What is the title and author's name?

Romancing the Ordinary: A Year of Simple Splendour by Sarah Ban Breathnach.

How old were you when you discovered it? I was 30.

How did you come across it?

A friend gave it to me. She started reading it and felt she wasn't at the right time in her life to appreciate the content, but thought I was – and she was right! The Christmas after I read it I ordered eight copies and gave them to all my good girlfriends as presents.

Was there a particular character who grabbed your imagination?

It's an 'inspirational book' of sorts for domestic life that encourages you to take pleasure in seemingly ordinary things. The book includes lots of quotes from authors who have written about similar themes over the years. One of my favourite quotes is by Ellen Glasgow: 'There are times when life surprises one, and anything may happen, even what one had hoped for.' The book is really about appreciating what you have right now, and how

the small space you create around yourself can influence your mood. It's not a self-help book; it's a book of reflections and thoughts that I found very comforting. It was also the perfect book to prepare me emotionally for motherhood, although you don't have to be a mother to appreciate it.

What emotions did it inspire in you?

It made me feel peaceful and content. It made me realise that many of life's pleasures are actually very small and simple things.

Did the book prompt you to do something differently?

Every chapter inspired me to do things differently; from cooking, to rearranging my linen cupboard, and even buying new socks. It's amazing how many things we ignore in our lives, and don't realise how changing them makes us feel better. For example, when was the last time you took time out to organise your socks drawer?

Could you sum it up in a few words?

It's a book that makes you rediscover yourself and the small things that actually make you happy. □

C U L T U R E C R U N C H

YOUR GUIDE TO THE HOTTEST HAPPENINGS IN AFRICA

12.12.15

JOBURG BET EXPERIENCE AFRICA



001 The BET Experience Africa is a lifestyle-themed event featuring some of Africa's finest musicians on one stage, leading up to the main performance by Grammy-award winning soul artist Maxwell. The day also includes fun for the whole family, with a celebrity basketball game and an entertaining comedy stage.
ticketpro.co.za

04.12.15 – 12.12.15

MOROCCO MARRAKECH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



002 The 15th edition of the Marrakech International Film Festival brings together leading figures in arts, media and culture, with a shared passion for film. Screen giant Francis Ford Coppola takes over as this year's jury president, and here an array of films – both short and long – by burgeoning and established creatives is showcased, all under the patronage of Morocco's King Mohammed VI.
festivalmarrakech.info

31.12.15

CAPE TOWN NEW YEAR'S EVE CONCERT



003 As a special part of the Kirstenbosch Summer Series, take in the sounds of Jeremy Loops and Grassy Sparks in this relaxing, acoustic-filled night leading up to midnight as you ring in the new year with music.
samba.org/gardens/kirstenbosch/summer-concerts

15.12.15

JOBURG BOYZ II MEN & JOE LIVE



004 The best of '90s R&B comes to Joburg with Boyz II Men and solo artist Joe. With more than 70 million albums sold, Boyz II Men's track record is phenomenal thanks to chart-topping hits *End of the Road* and *I'll Make Love to You*, while Joe's *No One Else Comes Close*, *All That I Am* and *I Wanna Know* are sure to make fans swoon.
computicket.co.za

29.12.15 – 31.12.15

ZIMBABWE VIC FALLS CARNIVAL



005 Make your way to the majestic Vic Falls for its end of the year Carnival on this three-day excursion. Departing from Jafuta, and stopping over at smaller surrounding towns, your final day includes a host of activities and live performances by Goodluck, Mango Groove and Mokoomba.
vicfallscarnival.com

25.12.15

DURBAN 18TH ANNUAL DURBAN UNDERGROUND



006 Durban's Moses Mabhida Stadium comes alive with this Christmas-themed outdoors concert. Hosted by DJ Sox, expect a slew of performers on the day, as you take in the hot weather with 7 000 attendees.
computicket.co.za

MOVIES TO WATCH

LOVE, THE COOPERS (11 DECEMBER)

A festive season without a Christmas movie? That's unheard of... Enter *Love, The Coopers*. With forced family gatherings and a healthy dose of comedy, Olivia Wilde and Amanda Seyfried unite on the big screen for a round of chaos and holiday cheer.



STAR WARS: EPISODE VII THE FORCE AWAKENS (18 DECEMBER)

The most highly anticipated film of the year is set 30 years after the *Battle of Endor* in *Return of the Jedi*. The latest *Star Wars* instalment follows *Han Solo* (Harrison Ford) in search of *Luke Skywalker* (Mark Hamill). Starring the beautiful *Lupita Nyong'o*, as pirate *Maz Kanata*, we can't wait!



STEVE JOBS (25 DECEMBER)

With Michael Fassbender portraying the man behind Apple's Mac (or Macintosh as it was first known), the biopic is loosely based on Walter Isaacson's *Steve Jobs* biography. Made up of three acts surrounding three important product launches, each key to Jobs' life, the film is directed by Danny Boyle.





TIME

OUT

In this age of social media and instant everything, Dimeji Alara asks, is a holiday a luxury some of us don't know how to embrace or connect with?

An annual holiday has become mandatory for me in the past couple of years. Whether travelling to a familiar destination or exploring unknown and occasionally risky terrain (yes, it has happened), a holiday is non-negotiable. But just how much of a holiday is it really?

A holiday, traditionally, is a time to disconnect from daily routine – work, home, life – to regroup, recharge and relax. But with 2016 around the corner, it's almost impossible, even absurd, to put the phone away, much less switch it off. And we shouldn't even go to that extreme point of no signal...

My best vacations, and there have been many, varied in destinations and experiences, and have all been absolutely memorable, without a presence on social media.

Returning to my second home, Paris, or spending some time with my brother and his wife in Marseille, off time ranges from mild to madness. I've been stranded in Amsterdam (it happened once, due to some unexpected issues with my card!), lost money gambling in Monte Carlo, road-tripping through West Africa and backpacking through the Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal and then Cape Verde. And I was #socialmediafree.

Now, a decade later, things have undergone a radical change. Fortunately (or not), I can document accurately every second of my experiences and share as little or as much as I want to with my followers instantly, unless I am feeling undecided about the filter.

If there is one thing I do regret about my pre-social media days is not having documented my trip through West Africa. It was 2003, before I signed up with Facebook, or any of the other major social media platforms. This trip was a roller coaster ride – the good, the bad and the terrifying. If I were active on social media then the laying down on the grass

moments with complete strangers in the middle of nowhere – somewhere in Ouagadougou – looking up at the stars wouldn't have been complete without a picture of the shimmering stars, while debating which filter to use; and chasing donkeys in the middle of the night between the Burkina Faso and Senegal borders (don't ask why!) would have earned a major status on Facebook, with or without a photo; even being pickpocketed at the train station in Bamako would have garnered another status update and made for a splendid read; the night I spent at a stranger's house would have been captured in 140 characters or less – with or without a hashtag.

As much as I regret not documenting some of my most exciting and challenging vacations, I'm happy that I genuinely enjoyed each moment. I wasn't busy looking for the perfect wall to create the perfect backdrop for my perfect picture, or busy editing the next images to post.

I constantly have to remind myself to disconnect, because I am almost always attached to my phone, losing focus of what a holiday is really all about. We're so caught up in the trend of sharing every single moment of our lives – from what we eat, to checking in, who we are with, and what we're wearing – that we forget the reason we all need to disconnect.

So when you next find yourself sitting on the shores of a white-sandy beach somewhere in the Caribbean (or, insert your dream destination here _____), sipping on coconut water (or a drink of your choice), staring longingly at the sparkling turquoise sea and the surrounding picturesque view, I challenge you to switch your phone off, take a deep breath, relish the moment, and enjoy your holiday – that break you genuinely deserve – because social media can wait, and will tick over, without one more hashtag, tweet, Instagram or snapchat insert from you. □



 @dimejialara





POLO

- SINCE 1976 -



@MrTyilo

The Oxford dictionary has three definitions for luxury. The first is that it is a state of great comfort or elegance, especially when involving great expense. The second defines it as a pleasure only obtained rarely. The third and last definition: an essential, desirable item, which is expensive or difficult to obtain. At some point in life, whether we can afford it or not, and often because we struggle to afford it, we each define or accept definitions of what we consider luxury to be.

About a quarter century ago, I was an inquisitive tween, somewhere between 10 and 12 years old. We were on a family vacation, at some or other franchise hotel

between Wilderness and George in the Western Cape. We'd arrived at dinner time, and as we sat down and the family ordered familiar meals, I ordered lobster. I'd never tried it before. Back home, in tiny inland King Williams Town restaurants were of the steak, burger, ribs, chicken wings and pizza variety. As far as ocean fare was concerned, my prepubescent palate was more familiar with fish fingers, hake and deep-fried calamari than crustaceans.

I really only ordered it because American TV shows like *Dynasty*, *Dallas*, and others, which traded on fantasies of overstated luxury, made it seem like an indulgence, and somewhat out of reach. And yet here it was, on a menu, perfectly attainable. This was it, I was living a life of luxury. What next? Caviar and champagne? If

only Alexis Carrington Colby could see me now. I'm not quite sure what I imagined it would taste like, but I absolutely hated it. My mum had given me a side-eye and my dad chuckled when I ordered it, as though they knew I'd hate it, and I wasn't about to let them be right. I put on a brave face; I started shoving it down as though the main ingredient in lobster was fish fingers. Yum.

Was my young palate not sophisticated enough? Had the soapies lied to me? Maybe American lobster was better? Yes, that must be it. I never made it to the end of that meal. My dad saved me by pretending to really want the lobster, and he offered to swap the remainder of my dish for his steak. That was my first proper disappointment with the masses of experiences sold through TV and advertising as luxurious and desirable. Since then I've been disappointed by wines, bad gourmet food combinations, unfriendly service at some fancy joints, poorly designed rooms that lack soul in five star hotels, and much more.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not letting one bad lobster make me hate all things luxurious, for every bad meal I've also had dining experiences that made me want to run to the kitchen and ululate in front of the chef. For every unimaginatively designed hotel room, I've also experienced incredible spaces, full of warmth and a welcoming aesthetic. In those experiences I've learnt to define what is desirable, what rarities give me pleasure, and what represents great comfort and elegance to me.

I've learnt that luxury need not be defined by TV shows and adverts, and although I am not adverse to extreme wealth, I've learnt that it doesn't only lie in our ability to 'make it rain'. It exists in the enjoyment and access to the things and experiences one truly loves and savours. Much of mine has been found in long drives through the Karoo, in weekends spent away in remote locations, with only the sounds of the wind and birds as the soundtrack. It's been in long bath times with my favourite oils, in time spent alone doing absolutely nothing. It's in seeking out experiences and indulging myself with the things that imbue my life with quality. It's the abundance of time and ability to clean and cook my own lobster, to taste exactly the way I like it. □

ALL LUXURIES ARE VALID

As the end of the year draws near, Malibongwe Tyilo reflects on luxury – in all its forms



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columns



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CALVIN KLEIN



3.1 PHILIP LIM

HOLIDAY

HAIR DIARIES

THE UNDONE BUN

Calvin Klein might be known for its sleek silhouettes but it was the perfectly imperfect hair that held our attention; so say goodbye to bad hair days! 3.1 Philip Lim reversed the look by creating wild wisps instead of @calvinklein's sleek and smooth look. You can't go wrong with this up-do.



Tool kit

Philip Kingsley Weatherproof Hairspray, R315 for 125ml
Kérastase Forme Fatale, R335
Tangle Teezer Compact Styler, R260

Thanks to various social media platforms we've got a backstage pass to the hair genius from the SS15 shows. And with this hair guide these looks are totally (and easily) achievable

braided bunch

Pretty plaits took centre stage, and the best part is that they work on all hair types, and can update your 'do in a matter of seconds. Whether subtly sitting beneath a bed of tussled hair (cue Marissa Webb) or a single, sleek braid behind your head, as seen at Tome, this look is worth every twist and turn.

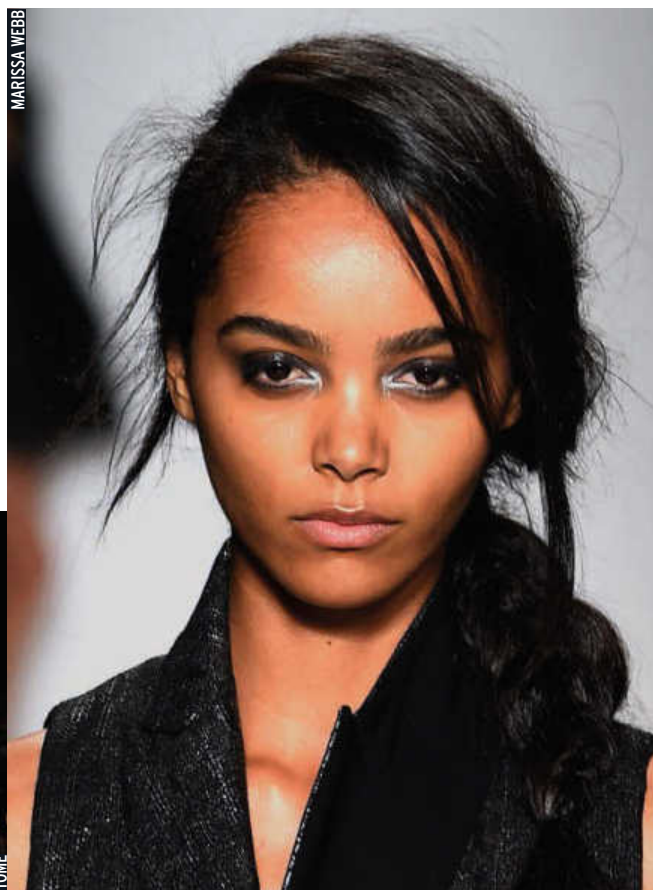


Tool kit

MoroccanOil Volumising Mousse, R340
Davines More Inside Medium Hairspray, R275
EVO Mister Fantastic, R335



MARISSA WEBB



TOME



BVLGARI



GOLDEA

THE ESSENCE OF THE JEWELLER

THE NEW EAU DE PARFUM

BED-HEAD BLOW-DRY

Thanks to #iwokeuplikethis the undone look is cool and coveted. Pairing perfectly with sophisticated separates, without looking like you're trying too hard, lose your brush and let your fingers do the styling (using the right products, of course!). Jourdan Dunn showed us how it's done @burberry prorsum.



Tool kit

Paul Mitchell Awapuhi Texturizing Sea Spray, R155
GHD Root Lift Spray, R195
Parlux 3800 Eco Friendly, R1 579



ALBERTA FERRETTI



J.W. ANDERSON



PRADA

polished

↑ PONYTAIL

Forget the thinking that this look was only suitable for school days, the likes of J.W. Anderson and Prada showed us just how chic the low pony could really be. This multifunctional hairstyle partners with day and night looks, and is the ultimate time-saver in your beauty routine.

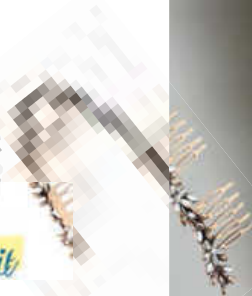
LITTLE DETAILS

Accessories are the oh-so simple yet ever-so effective way to transform your (hair) look, and the runways cemented that. The hair accessory at Fendi was a look all on its own, carefully crafted over a low, messy ponytail. Missoni showed us how scarves work wonders, and Bottega Veneta says we're never too old for Alice bands.



Tool kit

L'Oréal Professionnel Mythic Oil, R340
Paul Mitchell Worked Up Working Spray, R216
Headband, R249, Zara



BOTTEGA VENETA



GO ONLINE
for the hair-style
how to

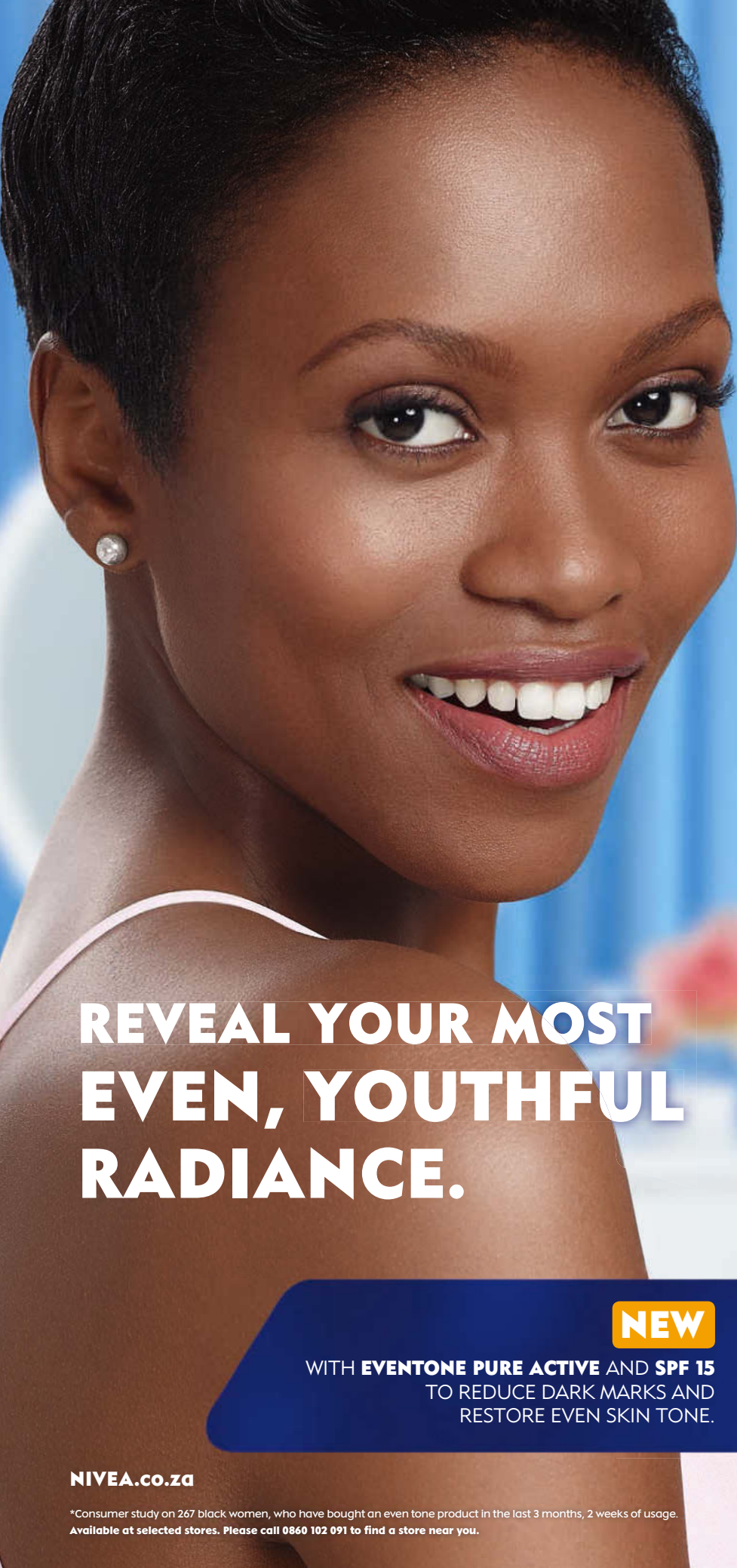
Tool kit

Dove Pure Care Dry Oil Shampoo, R70
GHD Platinum Styler, R2 999
Moroccanoil Molding Cream, R320



FENDI





9/10
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*Consumer study on 267 black women, who have bought an even tone product in the last 3 months, 2 weeks of usage.
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FROM THE #ELLEBEAUTY CLOSET

OLFACTIVE UPDATE

A sophisticated floral blend of jasmine and patchouli, with warm settling notes of cedar, honey and a hint of vanilla. The new fragrance from Yardley London, Bond Street - for today's modern women.



'Yardley Bond Street is a fragrance that reminds women why it is exciting to be a part of the modern world while also being proud to uphold their femininity'

NICOLE NEWMAN
BEAUTY EDITOR

GO ONLINE

*to see an interview
with the face of the
fragrance, Katryn
Kruger*

Yardley Bond Street 50ml fragrance, R350
Yardley Bond Street 30ml fragrance, R280

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R150



Hand Cream Trio

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PHOTOGRAPHY: NIGUITA BENTO / HEELS, R599, CALL IT SPRING; MAKEUP BAG, R400, TED BAKER AT STUTTFORDS;
CLARINS JOU ROUGE 741 IN RED ORANGE, R265; SUNGLASSES, R5 200, TOM FORD AT SDV EYEWEAR, & LIGHT,
R600, TYO



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4



13

FOR THE
GIRL

who knows her Marni from her Margiela



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1. Pillow case, R130, Stylistique Designs
2. Zip clutch, R1 299, Guess
3. Bracelet, R91 500, Cartier
4. Sunglasses, R4 400, Face a Face at Virgule
5. Chanel Rouge Allure 109 Rouge Noir, R510
6. Narciso Rodriguez For Her 30ml, R630, and Narciso Rodriguez Body Cream, 150g, R775, both available at Edgars
7. Scarf, R4 195, Hugo Boss
8. iPad cover, R1 395, Diane von Furstenberg at Callaghan
9. Louis Vuitton Fashion Photography, R1 300, Louis Vuitton
10. Watch, R3 999, Marc by Marc Jacobs at Watch Republic
11. Sling bag, R6 800, MM6 at Virgule
12. Lace up heels, R759, Zara
13. Heels, R11 700, Prada



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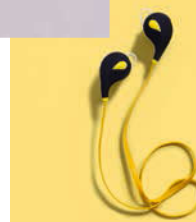
1. Gym bag, R279, Cotton On
2. Leggings, R699, Stella McCartney x adidas
3. Sports bra, R399, Country Road; printed sports bra, R700, Reebok
4. Bluetooth earphones, R699, Budds by DJ Fresh at That's Hot SA
5. Sunglasses, R1 990, Ray-Ban at Luxottica
6. The Body Shop Oils of Life Intensely Revitalizing Essence Lotion, R195
7. 3kg dumbbell, R120, and 2kg dumbbell, R80, both MRP Sport
8. Ignite XT trainers, R1 300, Puma
9. Windbreaker, R1 800, Superdry
10. Yoga mat, R399, Cotton On
11. Sports watch, from R3 499, Tomtom at Cape Union Mart
12. Secret socks, R150, Stance at The Store

FOR THE GIRL

who never misses that morning run and fresh juice



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FOR THE GIRL

who wants to travel the world



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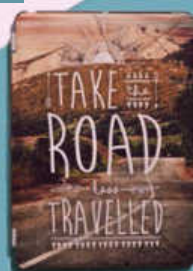
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1. Beach towel, R400, Billabong
2. Purse with portable charger, R799, Take Charge
3. Travel wallets, R2 150 each, Longchamp
4. Durable map, R140, Vamp
5. Sandals, R899, Aldo
6. Dr. Hauschka Freshness & Energy kit, R305, available at Woolworths
7. Notebook, R595, and pen, R550, both Paul Smith
8. Soft jacket, R999, Zara
9. iPad cover, R300, Typo
10. Phone cover, R1 649, Tumi
11. iPhone cover, R150, Typo
12. Suitcase, R1 999, Claymore at Frasers
13. Shorts, R599, Mango



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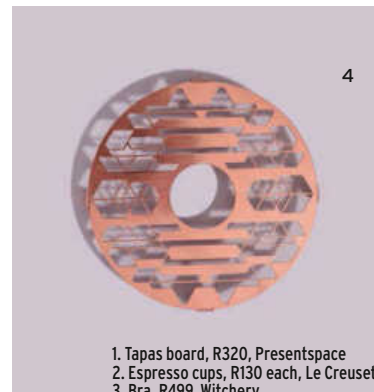
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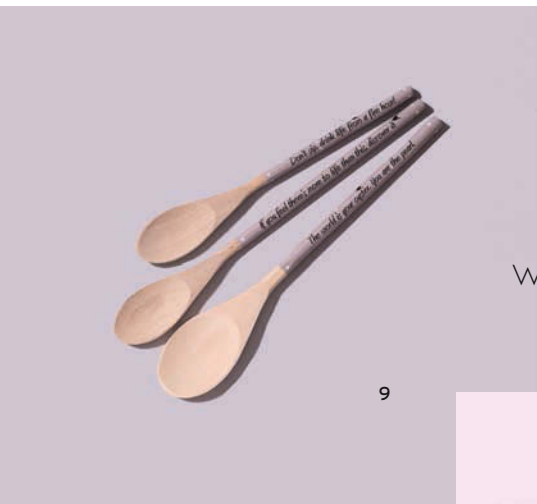


10



4

1. Tapas board, R320, Presentspace
2. Espresso cups, R130 each, Le Creuset
3. Bra, R499, Witchery
4. Cooling rack, R550, Presentspace
5. Espadrille pumps, R999, Trener
6. L'Occitane Dry Skin Hand Cream, 150ml, R330
7. Celebrate cookbook, R165, In Good Company
8. Tea towel, R125, Skinny la Minx at Vamp
9. Wooden spoon set, R150, Abode
10. Bunting flag, R230, Zana at Presentspace
11. Shirt, R769, Topshop



9

FOR THE
GIRL

who would choose a mixing bowl
over mixed prints



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FOR THE
MOM

who still asks if you have a warm top



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14

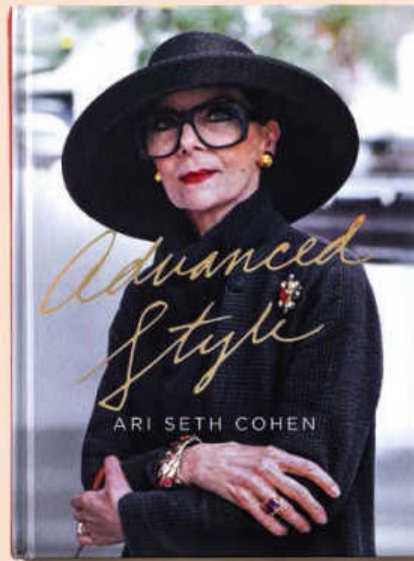


4

1. Ceramic bowl, R1 400, Hemelhuijs at Virgule
2. Wallet, R10 990, Burberry
3. Watch safe case, R10 700, Louis Vuitton; watch, R34 000, Hermès at Picot & Moss
4. Heels, R9 700, Gucci
5. *Mom's One Line a Day*, R245, In Good Company
6. Loafers, R1 199, Pringle of Scotland
7. Top handle bag, R5 500, Indulge Designs
8. *Advanced Style*, R520, Quirky Me
9. Dress, R13 990, Burberry
10. Spoon, R180, In Good Company
11. Christian Dior Fève Délicieuse, R2 300 available at Edgars
12. Bracelet, R799, and charms, from R1 299, all Pandora
13. Make-up bag, R1 850, Carvela at Spitz
14. Essential oil candle, R360, Africology



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STYLISH LINES

Their heritage serves as design inspiration, so it's only fitting that Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana pay homage to their beloved Italia with the Miss Sicily bag



RISEING STARS
Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana were a match made in design heaven when they debuted in 1985 during Milano Collezioni New Talents show. In 2015 there are more than 300 Dolce & Gabbana boutiques dotted globally - Joburg included.

MISS SICILY BAG

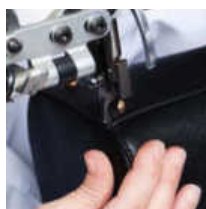


STYLE PERSONIFIED
Metal handles, luxuriously covered in leather, fit the bag's linear shape. From classic black, to animated family drawn prints, Miss Sicily is the epitome of style. The Sicily Mix (available in the Sandton City boutique) is a celebration of colour and textures, while the Carretto Siciliano print pays homage to Sicily.

MIA BELLA
Since 2009, Miss Sicily has been turning heads with its *bellissima* design aesthetic. Inspired by the austere style of Sicilian women in the '50s, traditional textures such as macramé and lace are used. A slightly smaller night version is every inch as style-laden as its day counterpart.



POP GOES ITALIA
The designers love to mix inspiration: they look to pop culture for a contemporary appeal as much as they root their designs in Italian heritage. Their icons? Screen legend Sophia Loren, French-Italian actress Monica Bellucci and Bianca Balti.



FEMININE FUNCTIONALITY
EVERY BAG BOASTS ITALIAN CRAFTSMANSHIP, MAKING IT TRULY DESIRABLE. IF SKIN'S YOUR THING, A LEATHER VERSION REQUIRES FIVE HOURS TO COMPLETE, WHILE THE MORE NOSTALGIC HAND-CROCHETED VERSION TAKES 12 HOURS TO MAKE. □



How much do you
really know about
Amber Heard,
actress and Johnny
Depp slayer?

Writer *Jessica
Pressler* discovers
she's far more
complicated – *and
even more fun* – than
the tabloids let on

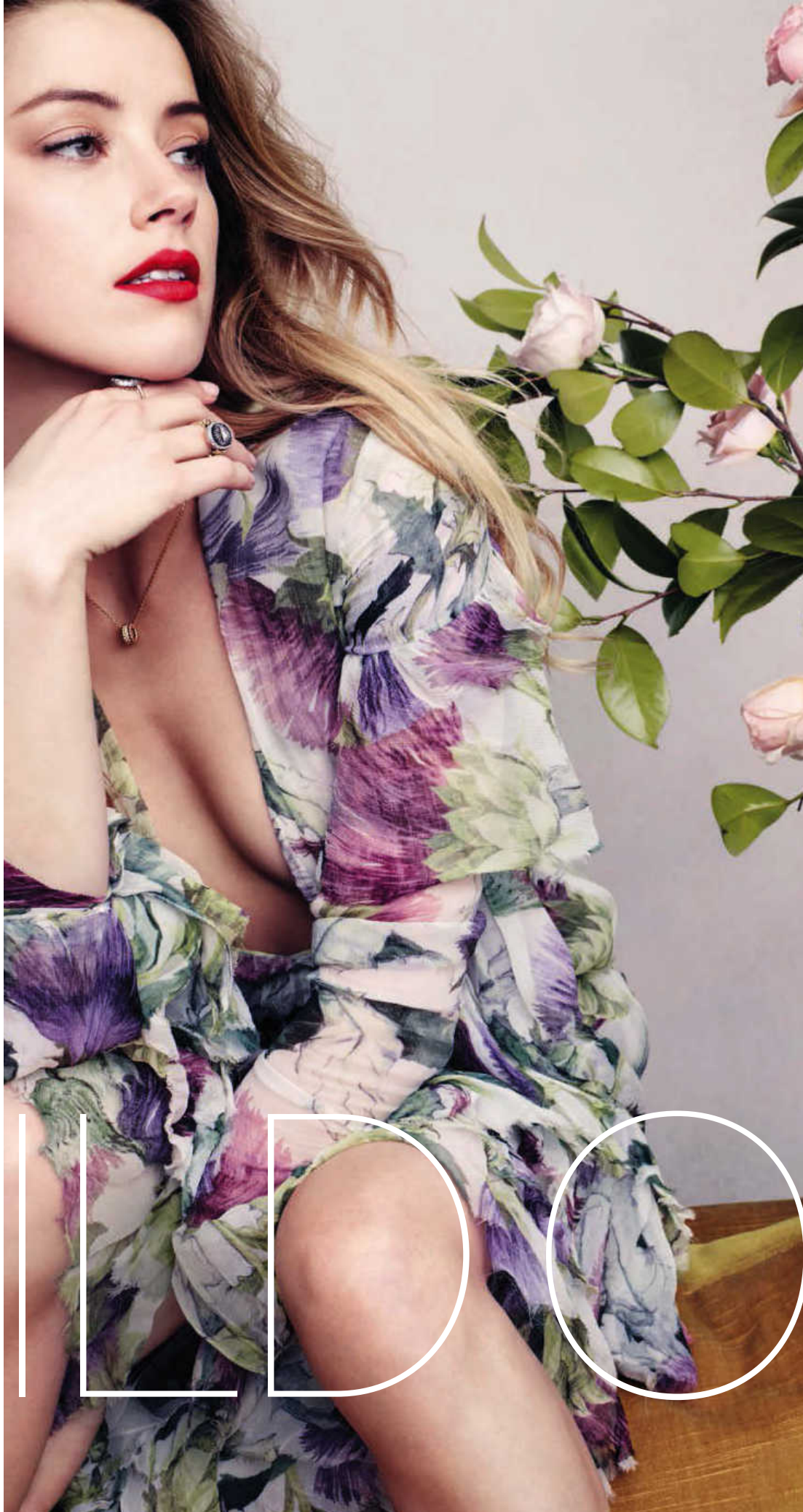
PHOTOGRAPHY

Liz Collins

STYLING

Samira Nasr

THE W





Printed silk dress, Gucci; gold and diamond pendant necklace, Van Cleef & Arpels; enamel diamond and silver-plated gold rings, both Fred Leighton

Amber Heard is pawing through the record bin at Other Music in NoHo, green eyes narrowed in concentration, shuffling through the stack until she finds what she is looking for. 'Blind Willie McTell!' she says, holding up the record. 'That's my favourite. If you really want to go into blues,' she instructs, 'you go to the Blinds: Blind Willie McTell. Blind Boy Fuller. Blind Snooks Eaglin. Blind Joe Hill. Blind Willie Johnson. They are all blind. I'm not kidding. There's a million of them.' Heard catches her Texas accent peeking through and covers her mouth. 'It happens when I get excited,' she whispers. Afterward, Heard steps into the sunshine with a bagful of vinyl to add to her collection; she actually travels with a record player, she says.

For Heard, vinyl sounds so much better than digital, and books are better than e-readers. In fact, she has a rare book collection. 'I just love the smell!' she says, throwing her head back so theatrically, it's like she's auditioning for a remake of *When Harry Met Sally*. A few times, people turn their heads to look at her, but it's unclear if they know her as her or just think she's a pretty girl. No one stops to say, for instance, 'I loved you as the hot undead girl in *Zombieland*,' or 'You were so good as The Girl in that Mel Gibson/Harrison Ford/Nicolas Cage movie.' The only indication that anyone has really recognised her is the paparazzi photos of Heard that come out the next day.

Between living in Los Angeles, and shooting a film in Europe, Heard barely knows what time zone she's in, she says on the way to the restaurant she has chosen, a Ukrainian place that she endorses with the same full-throated enthusiasm she gives blind bluesmen and rare books. 'It's one of those bits of New York that remind me of real New York,' she says. 'And I love to say, unless I'm near a cheque-cashing place or a mattress store, I don't feel like I am in a real place.'

If all of this – the blues, the verbiage, the messiness – seems a little bit strenuously real, well, that might be because Heard wants, very badly, to be seen as a real person. She is tired, she tells me, of being put in a 'Barbie box' just because she is blonde and attractive, of playing The Girl – both in her career and in real life. 'I feel like I'm constantly fighting against my exterior,' she says, 'or this exterior presentation of myself because of how I look or perhaps because of who I am with.'

It was her Aphrodite looks that got her, via modelling, from her Texas hometown to Los Angeles, and her looks did enable her to land a variety of The Girl roles, which established her enough of a presence in Hollywood to be cast in big projects like *The Rum Diary* (in 2011 opposite her now-hubby Johnny Depp) and the short-lived NBC series *The Playboy Club*. This is a path she could have stayed on. Instead, Heard is making a dedicated push to show the world she is capable of being more than just The Girl.

At the moment, she's in New York for the premiere of two small indie films at the Tribeca Film Festival, *When I Live My Life Over Again*, in which she plays a struggling singer/songwriter, and *The Adderall Diaries*, co-starring James Franco. And this is just the beginning. She's just wrapped a starring role in *London Fields*, an adaptation of the Martin Amis novel, and a supporting part in *The Danish Girl*, the story of one of the first recipients of sexual reassignment surgery, played by Eddie Redmayne. 'One of the greatest actors of my generation,' she says, blowing on her coffee. Heard would like to see herself in that category one day, and to that end, she is working hard, putting in five to seven hours of ballet a day for her role as a dancer in the film.

But she does make a case that suggests her efforts are not just for her own personal gain. 'I'm trying to find scripts that are compelling and complex,' she says. 'That have the power to, not change – that sounds really grand – but that have the power to impact someone.'

Like most women in Hollywood, Heard is depressed by the dearth of layered female roles out there. 'I get a stack of scripts, like, once a month, and most of the time, you find these placeholder girls that are there to provide a bounce for the male character,' she says. 'So we know he's funny because she's serious and she's mad at him. We know he's strong because she needs saving. So really her job is to validate this personality trait of our hero or male. I mean,' she says, 'we're trying to imitate life, and it seems to me a deeply saddening injustice that we are so uncreative and uninterested in developing representations of female life.'

The waiter comes by to refill her coffee, and Heard gets momentarily embarrassed about her 'pseudo-feminist rant.' But the point is made.

Growing up in a suburb of Austin, Texas, Heard had what her mother called an 'adventurer spirit.' 'They thought they were raising, you know, this, like, sweet Texan Christian girl, who was going to stay with the family just as everyone else does in Texas, but I always wanted to go and do, and I wanted to get out of Texas,' she says. Like all teenagers, Heard didn't feel like she fit in. 'I was poor and skinny and weird,' she says. Even then, it sounds like her looks sometimes eclipsed the rest of her: 'Some kids called her "Amber seen and not Heard,"' a classmate told Britain's *Daily Mail*. But she used the pretty to get a modelling agent, which she saw as an exit strategy. Shuttling back and forth on the bus to Austin for small-time gigs like catalogues and dentistry commercials, Heard would pass an art-house movie theatre that, one day, she decided to check out. Hours later, she emerged to a blinking set of text messages from her parents. The theatre staff 'weren't really that diligent about manning this cinema in the matinee hour,' she says. 'So I would just sneak in. Two dollars to see several movies!'

New Zealand director Niki Caro's film *Whale Rider*, about a preteen Maori girl fighting sexism in her tribe, changed her life. 'It was so foreign and alien to me in Texas,' she says.

'WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR A LONG TIME NOW, SO IT'S BEEN A FAIRLY ORGANIC PROCESS.

I have a fiercely independent spirit.

I have my own everything'

'At the same time, I deeply emotionally related what this character confronted with the aggravations and irritations and social-sexual aspects of her tribe, who was similar to me as a young person. I left the theatre like, you know, just a bit tingly.'

Just before her 17th birthday, Heard's best friend died in a car accident. The experience affected her deeply. Talking about it now, she chokes up. 'As a kid, you think you live forever, you think you're invincible, and that is immediately confronted when you lose someone close to you,' she says. Not long after, Heard declared to her Christian parents that she was an atheist, and that she wasn't going to waste any more of her time in Texas.

Within a year, she had dropped out of school and moved to New York to model full time. 'It did cement in me a growing sensation and awareness that I was going to explore,' she says. 'I was going to do something other than what everyone else told me I should do. I think it was a reminder that today is what you have. Really.' As it turned out though, Heard hated modelling. Being a mannequin was not for her. She just wanted to go and do. She stuck with it for a while in order to travel – to Miami, to Europe – but soon she was back in Austin, where her commercial agent told her about an audition for a movie, *Friday Night Lights*, which she booked. Looking back, the part doesn't seem like a terribly auspicious start: 17-year-old Heard mostly rolls around topless in white, fringed cowboy boots. But the part got her a Hollywood agent, who, a year later when Heard moved to Los Angeles, helped her get a tiny part as a young Charlize Theron in *North Country*, a movie about a landmark sexual-harassment case that happened to be directed by *Whale Rider*'s Niki Caro. It was an ironic, serendipitous gift,' Heard says.

Ironic, perhaps, because she wouldn't see another script like that for a long time. Broke and carless in the biggest driving city on the planet, Heard spent her days riding around

on the bus to auditions with a massive bag her friends still tease her about. 'It was sad,' she says. 'It had this pink halter top in it for those roles and a cardigan and a button-up for a different kind of role, and I would change in the bathroom.' The pink halter top came out of the bag a lot more often. Heard was cast as a shop girl in *The O.C.*, as the title character in horror flick *All the Boys Love Mandy Lane*, as a young actress called Amber in an episode of *Californication*. And as she gained her footing in the business, she tried to make the characters she was cast more interesting, 'to imbue them with something other,' she says.

The whole time we have been talking, Heard's marriage to Johnny Depp has barely come up. It's just been sitting there, the proverbial elephant in the room, while I wrestle with my feelings about asking about it. On the one hand: Obviously, a woman should not be defined by who she is married to. It's 2015, and Hillary Clinton is running for president. Wait that may be a bad example. On the other hand: a small-town Texas girl marrying one of the biggest and wealthiest movie stars in the world is indisputably interesting. She's told me a few things, like that he moved out of his Edward Scissorhands-like castle, and they share a place of their own in Los Angeles, and that she has imported her sister Whitney from Texas and a couple of friends, and they all live really nearby — like, on the property — and have dinners together and stuff like that. 'Like you have a compound?' I ask, trying to get my head around it. Yeah, like that. Her ring is vintage and cool but not insane. They married on an island. 'Because he owns an island, right?' Right. I still have so many unanswered questions, like the logistics alone: What did he say the first time he called her? 'Hi, this is Johnny Depp.' Or did he text? Does Johnny Depp text? Does she call him Johnny Depp? Like, 'Johnny Depp and I chose sheets today.' Or does she just call him Johnny? No, she says, which just raises more questions. 'We have a fairly normal, um,' she says, politely, but also clearly hating



Faux fur coat,
Dries Van Noten;
vintage denim
shorts, The
Castings
for Artizia;
enamel diamond
and silver-plated
gold rings, both
Fred Leighton



Denim shirt, Denim & Supply Ralph Lauren; pink topaz, diamond, and rose gold necklace, James De Givenchy for Taffin; earring, Amber's own

this topic. 'He has his life, and I have mine, and our challenge is to be able to find time to be together.' But, okay, I press. It must be kind of crazy. 'Nothing is a dramatic change,' she says, unconvincingly. 'We've been together for a long time now, so it's been a fairly organic process. I have a fiercely independent spirit. I have my own everything.' But – now I'm on a roll – this is a man who, a co-star in one of his movies once told me, is so incandescently famous that if he goes to a restaurant, they pretty much clear the place and sometimes block off the streets outside.

'What if you two just go to Starbucks or something?' I wonder. Heard snorts with laughter. 'He would have no interest in that.' Which I actually find to be a very satisfying piece of information. 'The thing that really scares me is the potential of losing my freedom,' she says suddenly. 'I never want for my life to lose the ability to transverse the world, with freedom and ease.' She repeats, with feeling: 'The freedom and ease I have worked so hard to acquire for myself.'

And she knows that any information she gives, even to quell my innocent curiosity, will inevitably be plucked out and processed into a universe of blog posts. 'I'm already probably pregnant and divorced,' she says. In fact, all of those things are in the atmosphere as she speaks, although the slinky silk slip dress she'll wear on the red carpet later tonight will put to bed the pregnancy rumours, and her trip to Australia to see Depp the following week will at least briefly quell the rumours that they are 'headed for divorce' because Heard has been spending too much time with her ex, female photographer Tasya van Ree.

That relationship, which was serious enough that she was calling herself Amber van Ree for a while, was also a matter of public interest, although the tone of the coverage was more similar to frat boys seeing two hot girls kissing in a bar. They are still friends. As for her and Depp, 'We're very happy,' she says, baring her teeth in a smile. 'Very. Ironically, the people with whom I choose to share my life or by whom I'm compelled just so happen to be unwitting proponents, like a distracting force,' she continues. 'It's hard because I fall in love again and again. I'm in a very similar type of situation and have my career that I've been working hard for now, and yet I still am constantly confronted with these forces that can deflect from where I see my real work.'

Clearly, Amber Heard is an actor in her own right, and by all accounts, a very good one. At the same time, it's very hard to imagine that being Johnny Depp's wife doesn't give her, as she says, a bigger mallet with which to form her career. It's kind of the Hollywood version of being... well, Bill Clinton's wife. At the very least, she now gets to do the stuff she wants – 'tiny tiny indies' – instead of bill-paying, boob-baring stuff.

'I mean, there are pros and cons,' says her friend, photographer and TV host Amanda de Cadenet. 'If it's helpful in any way, it's that people will pay more attention to who this woman is. She is a really profoundly smart, intuitive young woman, and I have yet to see her play a role that really shows the depth that exists within her.' In the future, de Cadenet expects that will change. 'I can't wait until she starts producing her own films, and we're going to see her sensibility.'

Heard and Depp will appear on-screen together for the first time since *The Rum Diary* in *London Fields*, a film in which, perhaps not coincidentally, Heard 'really takes the stereotype head-on,' according to director Mathew Cullen, playing Nicola Six, a literal

'I NEVER WANT FOR MY LIFE TO LOSE THE ABILITY TO TRANSVERSE THE WORLD,

femme fatale who uses her sexual wiles to manipulate men into plotting her own murder. *with freedom and ease'*
'She was very passionate about playing this role, partially because there are so many parallels,' says Cullen. 'You have somebody that's incredibly beautiful and very smart, but people know her mostly through her sexuality.' Occasionally, on set, Heard and Cullen butted heads. The character, as written by Martin Amis, is a succubus stereotype, and Heard wanted her to have more layers. 'Amber is a very strong-willed person,' Cullen says.

The waiter arrives to take our plates away. Heard takes out a small canister of vitamins. She feels a little something coming on, and she is determined not to get sick. In celebration of completing all of these movies, she's organised a 'girls' weekend' in New York with her sister and a bunch of her best friends, who are already in her hotel room, 'probably drinking,' and awaiting her arrival. 'Through sheer willpower,' she says, shaking the vitamins she has in her hand, 'I'm going to overcome this thing.' □



GO ONLINE
for Amber Heard
red carpet moments

ELLE **EXCLUSIVE**

with LOVE

RICCARDO TISCI

In September, *Givenchy* artistic director *Riccardo Tisci* brought the maison's spring/summer 2016 collection to *New York*. The show was Tisci's open love letter to the city, with the recurring themes of peace, humanity, spirituality and, of course, love. The day before the show, Tisci invited *ELLE* to share in the *most intense, personal moments* leading up to that special event, and *Sylvia Jorif* got to experience it all

Photography: *Matthew Kanbergs*



As the day comes to an end in New York, a unique, golden light drapes it, and it's just how Givenchy's artistic director Riccardo Tisci wants the sunset to be. It's easy to imagine that the God Tisci holds in his heart had heard his prayers, because only 24 hours earlier Manhattan experienced a deluge of rain.

A day synonymous with heartache, on this September 11, love and fashion dominate – a fitting way for Tisci to celebrate a decade at the helm of Givenchy. An anniversary he wanted to celebrate across the Atlantic, offering an outdoor show at the foot of One World Trade Centre. This particular September 11 was picked for him by the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), the organisation that handles the scheduling of the shows, and Tisci, who, like any passionate Italian, is superstitious, takes it as a sign of encouragement to highlight the things he treasures most on his Instagram account: #love #gang #family – the trinity of hashtags underlying the theme of this show.

Scenography for the show is conceptualised by Tisci's closest friend and artist Marina Abramovic. Designed to be an emotional experience, attendees are greeted by a steady stream of Tibetan mantras. Cementing Tisci's success, the show also coincides with the opening of a new boutique on Madison

Avenue, designed by him.

'I don't think of these past 10 years as a golden number to be honoured, but as a time to stop and celebrate life. I wanted



it to be an honest show that projects me,' says Tisci. Plainly speaking, Tisci is reflecting on his personal genesis, and his passion for love is irrefutable.

'I was born into a very poor family. I was so young when my father died that I have to go to the depths of my memory to retain what remains of his image. I was brought up by my mother and eight sisters. I had to go to work when I was 12 to help them. We didn't have anything, but I was so loved. My mother and sisters had nothing to give me except their love. Love gave me courage, it sustained me and kept me alive.'

And Tisci has no fear of the clichés the word might convey. He has put all his love and heart into this show. Buddhist religious chants have not been met with cynicism either. 'Marina and I did it all, including the music. We thought maybe we were going too far. And then, after all, like it or not, it didn't matter. This moment will remain. Marina and I wanted to show what is most tender to us.'



And we are not the only ones experiencing Tisci's dream tonight. Alongside fashion professionals are a slew of celebrities: from Julia Roberts, dressed in a Tisci-portrait tee teamed with a suit, to director Pedro Almodovar, Uma Thurman and Liv Tyler, other favourites take to the front row. Courtney Love, Nicki Minaj, Ciara, Naomi Campbell and, of course, Kanye and Kim, who keep the crowd and show waiting for an hour. In amongst a sea of famous faces, are anonymous ones, and making fashion an all-inclusive journey, Tisci has invited 800 fashion students to attend the show, resulting in a 300-metre long line of waiting guests. And for those who cannot make it inside, the show is broadcast on giant screens scattered throughout Manhattan. 'I love my tribe, but fashion is for everybody, and I wanted to invite the greatest number of people,' he explains. 'I come from the street and I wanted to pay homage to the street.'

Now, the sky is dark blue and Tisci's nocturnal score begins. The models arrive in delicate lace, each taking on the fragility of the night: déshabillé in silk, openwork pajamas, lustrous, slip dresses, tuxedos flirting with transparency and draping. In total, 57 outfits bring the show to life, in a monochromatic palette, interspersed with 10 covetable haute couture pieces. 'Without question, it is the most Parisian of my collections and I wanted to show it in New York because this is where Hubert de Givenchy became famous,' says Tisci. 'Fifty-two years after him, I wanted to re-establish this link between this profoundly French house



and the enthusiasm of the Americans. To transport the idea of the French woman in an evanescent gown, legs bared, with a man's jacket, stiletto heels and a cigarette in the corner of her mouth. An ideal woman that I have fashioned over my 10 years at Givenchy.'

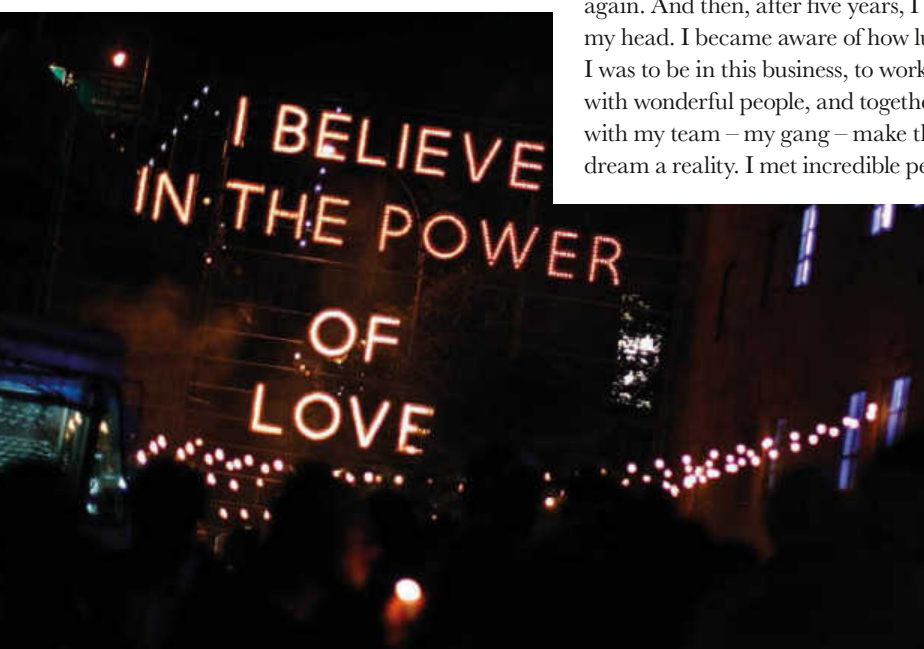
The story goes that Tisci accepted the job because his mother was forced to sell the family house, which his father built with his own hands. 'I believed in this project and I took the plunge. I had to find a new identity for the label, which richly deserved to return to the limelight. I devoted all my energy, creativity and faith to it. At one point, I felt as if I was becoming lost. Because when you are no one and suddenly you join an important house, a flagship of a luxury group, and you are surrounded by devotion, and rapidly earn a lot of money, the contrast is too great. It stressed me and I became closed up within myself. I opened up again. And then, after five years, I raised my head. I became aware of how lucky I was to be in this business, to work with wonderful people, and together with my team – my gang – make this dream a reality. I met incredible people,

discovered extraordinary cultures. I realised that I could make people dream. That's a frightening feeling. I also learned to have confidence in what I was doing, and that was fantastic too. Givenchy changed my life and the lives of those I love. That's what I wanted to express through this show.'

For tonight's show, Tisci indulged himself and invited all his friends. Even ones who don't know him felt part of his #love #gang #family community. 'We Italians,' he says, 'live in clans. I need people I love around me. It's my base. As a child I was terrorised by the idea that my mother and sisters would die before me and I would be alone in the world. Around this initial gang, my family, I created another gang, my friends, who are, in fact, my family, too. My luxury is knowing that I will never be alone. Having friends makes you special, it makes you a good person.'

Tisci works and lives with his friends, and casts them in his campaigns: longtime friend and '90s supermodel (who still walks his shows) Mariacarla Boscono, supermodel Joan Smalls, Donatella Versace, friend and transgender model Lea T., Karen Elson... photographers Mert and Marcus, wherever they are, they are there when he calls.

After the show, Tisci joins them in a garage transformed to host a wild party. In the darkness, a neon sign reads: 'I believe in the power of love.' It may be naïve, childish, but it still works. There is nothing more beautiful than a light shining in the night.



the VISIONARY

It's not hard to decode Italian-born Riccardo Tisci's design DNA: Goth with a twist. Having looked to The Cure, Robert Smith and Siouxsie Sioux for inspiration, the youngest of nine (he was raised with eight older sisters after losing his father aged six) found refuge in London as a 17-year-old where he worked as a cleaner, and assisted at Antonio Berardi's studio. The latter led to a government grant to study design at Central Saint Martins.

When he joined Givenchy as a relatively unknown, Tisci must have struggled to find his identity as a designer in the context of the storied fashion house that fell on hard times. It wasn't an easy balancing act to master: how do you merge Givenchy's classic design aesthetic (the iconic little black dress made famous by Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* was a Hubert de Givenchy creation) with a futuristic appeal for a new consumer, all while keeping your punk-goth-rock sensibility alive? It takes audacity and faith.

Handpicked to take over from Julien Macdonald in 2005, it was a gamble, but without risk there would be no reward. And at first it seemed like a lost cause as his debut for the house that launched in 1952 was considered a mess by almost every critic. But a visionary designer designs with the future in mind, not the present, and it's that foresight that has kept Tisci at the forefront of fashion, that and his ability to connect with likeminded individuals.

Confessing that he designs for the people that he likes not for those who are trending, his growing circle of (A-list) friends – the *famiglia* are vanguards in their own right – includes Madonna (in a head-turning studded

tartan blazer, teamed with a fishnet bodysuit and magenta pumps at the 2013 Met Gala), Kanye West (remember that leather skirt-cum-kilt he rocked as part of the *Watch The Throne* tour with Jay Z in 2011) and Rihanna (wearing his Rottweiler printed tee, which was spotted on many other celebs from Usher to Liv Tyler), and many more.

It's about the people who pique his interest, make his heart race, and who are inspired to wear a half-Bambi printed sweatshirt, or pink and red head-to-toe florals. The latter, teamed with sleeved gloves, was how Kim Kardashian, who up until 2013 was unofficially banned from the Met Gala, showed off her growing baby bump, arm in arm with Kanye West. It sparked a lot of conversation and mostly ridicule for both Kardashian and Tisci but neither gave into the negative hype, even after she was cropped out of *Vogue's* online gallery of best dressed guests, showing only a tux-wearing West.

Tisci also designed Kardashian's ethereal wedding gown. And there have been many more A-listers who have turned to him for their red carpet moments: Julianne Moore (a column silver sequin dress and a feathered trim at the 2015 Golden Globes), Rooney Mara (in a delicate lace haute couture gown in Cannes) and Beyoncé (in a bespoke peekaboo dress delicately embellished with multi-coloured stones). And it's not over yet.

In an industry renowned for its musical chairs syndrome, the rumours that Tisci is moving elsewhere remain just that (for now). And much like his contemporaries, Alber Elbaz, Raf Simons and Hedi Slimane, Tisci has successfully established a unique language for Givenchy; a language whose reach is expanding with every collection that he unveils, and the growing number of friends he makes along the way.

Quite ironic to think that a young Tisci who longed for a father figure is now a patriarch with a coveted sense of style, and that's love. □



GO ONLINE
for Riccardo Tisci's
top 10 red carpet
designs

CROSSING THE LINE

It's time we *recognise our rights* and
speak about *sexual harassment*
in the workplace, writes *Lily Monson**

Last year I travelled abroad on a work trip: there were four women on the trip, which was by invitation from a big international company. There was one man representing the company and looking after us on our travels. He was like the cat that got the cream. It started off with harmless flattery, the 'you look very nice today' type gesture, but it soon descended into lewd and, quite frankly, sexually loaded and vulgar remarks. It wasn't just me, the sleazy quips were directed to each and every one of us, and we had to endure it day in and day out. The one evening we all had cocktails at the hotel bar, and while the other ladies were dancing he sidled up to me; sweaty, salivating and red in the face from too much beer, he muttered something down my neck about what a lucky man my boyfriend was, his hand edging around my waist.

I felt my shoulders prick and my teeth clench, this man had just crossed the line.

The problem is that it's a very blurred line, and more often than not we find ourselves questioning the parameters of what is and isn't ok. Many of us sweep it under the rug, laughing it off along with the countless other situations that on reflection were simply not ok. It's in part because many of us don't know what defines sexual harassment, or that we have rights to take action. And, while you might believe your story is too trivial to talk about, once you bring up the subject you'll be surprised at the number of women with a 'do you know what happened to me' tale to tell.

The Employment Equity Act gives you certain rights in the field of unfair discrimination, and when it comes to gender

'AND, WHILE YOU MIGHT BELIEVE YOUR STORY IS TOO TRIVIAL TO TALK ABOUT, ONCE YOU BRING UP THE SUBJECT YOU'LL BE SURPRISED AT THE NUMBER OF WOMEN WITH A 'DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO ME' TALE TO TELL'

discrimination The Code of Good Practice, as provided by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) gives you a fair idea of what warrants a case against unacceptable behaviour. Sexual harassment is defined as any 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' and includes 'all unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct.' Examples can range from unsolicited touching, to seedy jokes, comments with sexual overtones or about a person's body or sex life, indecent exposure, wolf whistling, displays of explicit pictures, and sexual favouritism – where a person in authority rewards only those who respond to his or her advances.

According to local labour law specialist Gail Blacher, 'the law is actually very strong in favour of people being harassed, people just don't know about it.' And, as of April 2013, the Protection from Harassment Act came into operation affording victims an effective remedy.

When it comes to sexual harassment cases, the CCMA now allows you to represent yourself, whereas beforehand you'd have to go to the Labour Court and seek legal representation, which is an expensive and somewhat onerous process. Of course, the key to a strong case is evidence, and with that comes the responsibility not to ignore the harassment but to empower yourself to take action. Because the definition of sexual harassment is 'unwelcome' conduct, it is vital to make it clear to the perpetrator, in writing so as to document proof, that the behaviour is not invited. Blacher recommends keeping a log from the start; with emails, memos, gifts, and notes on any incident or relevant information. And, although it may seem intimidating, you must report the matter directly to your HR or employer, as many companies will have a sexual harassment policy in place to protect you.

The sad reality is, however, that many sexual harassment cases are often complicated and still clouded by a male dominated climate. One cannot forget the infamous case of axed Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi, whose staff member Jacqueline Phooko accused him of rape after he hired her to work for his party without proper procedure when he took a fancy to the then 26-year-old at an SAA check-in counter. While there may or may not have been a consensual affair as Vavi claimed, the issue here was not adultery but that Vavi grossly abused his position of power and privilege to take full advantage of a young woman who was a low-level employee not adequately equipped for the position she had been appointed. The charge was subsequently withdrawn and settled with monetary compensation, an act that was soon followed by Vavi publishing a statement on the National Union

of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) site saying that 'we will be looking out for signs that these anti-revolutionary working class forces that are hell bent on destroying the federation, and thus irreparably fragmenting and weakening the power of the revolutionary working class in this country, try to migrate a private and personal matter into an organisational matter, in Cosatu.' In doing so, Vavi and Cosatu, who purport to act for equality and dignity for and between the sexes, guilty or not guilty, came off as agents of patriarchy with Vavi positioning himself as the victim and dubbing Phooko a loose woman seeking extortion.

The disturbing truth is that we don't get to hear about half, if not more, of the day-to-day cases because too many women don't speak up. Despite several conversations with work colleagues, and the women I travelled with abroad, about the sexually crude and offensive behaviour of that man, not one of us took action. I know I was hesitant because I was worried about the ramifications it could have. What about his poor wife and children if he lost his job? But, in hindsight, I wish I had filed a complaint with the company at the very least, because as women we have to be the change we want to see, and by letting men get away with it there will never be gender equality in the work place. Ultimately you have to ask yourself, do I feel uncomfortable with this? Is this demeaning the person that I am? Does this jeopardise my integrity and my dignity as a woman? If you can answer yes to any of the above it's time to speak up. □

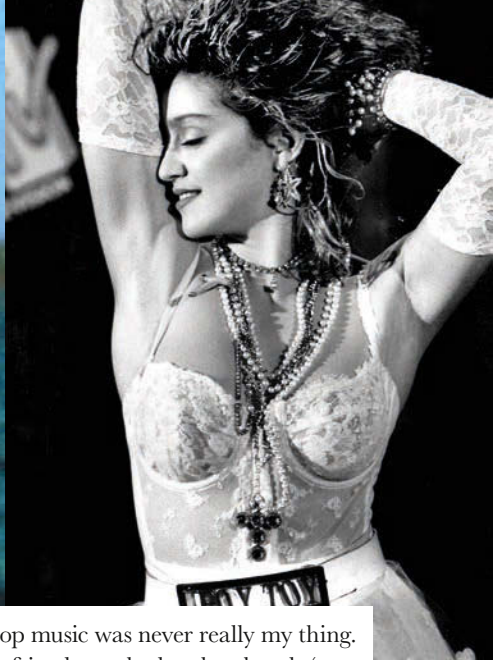
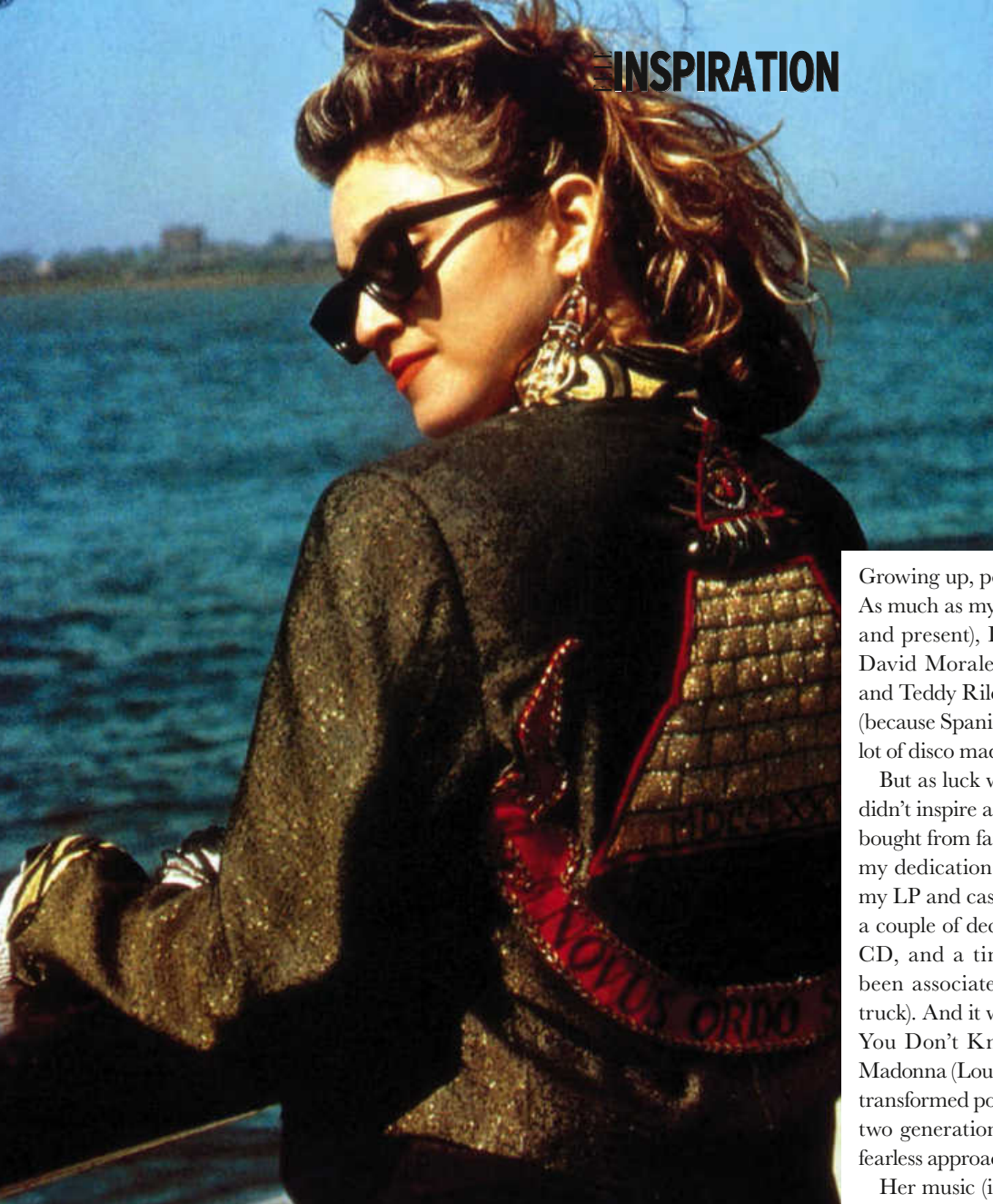
HOW TO DEAL WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT

1. **Tell the harasser** that the conduct is unwelcome.
2. **Keep a log** from the start.
3. **Lodge a grievance** as soon as possible.
4. **Don't resign** from your job.
5. **Get legal advice** from your company's HR department head.

ASK THE EXPERT

Are you being sexually harassed at work?

Contact labour law advocate of the SA High Court, and founder of Rights@Work, Gail Blacher: gail@blacher.com; rightsatwork.co.za; 011 483 1388.



AN ODE

TO MY FASHION ICON

Growing up, *fashion was an all-inclusive experience*, but carving out an identity away from the norm was a luxury not every one was ready to embrace. *Tidi Benbenisti* reminisces about her circa '80s style icon, *Madonna*, and how personal style – then and now – calls for breaking boundaries and *being brave*

Growing up, pop music was never really my thing. As much as my friends crushed on boy bands (past and present), I preferred the likes of Daft Punk, David Morales, Frankie Knuckles, Todd Terry and Teddy Riley. Latino music still rates very high (because Spanish was spoken at home), and a whole lot of disco made me smile (and still does).

But as luck would have it, my music influencers didn't inspire a collection of branded clothing to be bought from fan clubs or department stores, and so my dedication to their creativity was reflected in my LP and cassettes collection (yes, we are talking a couple of decades back before I even heard of a CD, and a time where downloads would have been associated with removal of furniture off a truck). And it was a project – Dress Like The Icon You Don't Know – that led me to provocateur Madonna (Louise Ciccone): the aspiring dancer who transformed popular culture and influenced at least two generations with her commercial sound and fearless approach to life, present company included.

Her music (in the '80s) was the epitome of pop, but it was her fashion that piqued my interest and her fearless sense of self and style that intrigued me even more.

Before the Icon project, I was a safe dresser. I loved my super-skinny jeans and hotpants. I loathed shoulder pads (and I still do). I wore (black) miniskirts and bodycon dresses (pre-Hervé Léger days) with loafers or heels in pastels and brights. These were possibly bold choices but they were not groundbreaking because there were no accompanying fishnet stockings or fingerless lace or leather gloves. And while there were cropped tops, they never revealed my midriff and were always worn over a tank top because my mother would have grounded me well beyond my 21st birthday. My wardrobe wasn't home to bustiers or coned, fringed bras, not until I was 21. As for paisley, it was too psychedelic for me – until my Icon project research kicked off in earnest with the help of imported music magazines, *Smash Hits* and *Number One*.

In the mid to late '80s and Madonna's fashion mood was a mix between '50s bee-bop and rebel rock. It was her short-lived marriage to bad boy Sean Penn that inspired *True Blue*, where she rocked a cropped platinum cut, and the music videos accompanying her chart topping hits *True Blue*, *Papa Don't Preach* and *Open Your Heart* reflected a bold new take on self-expression.

Her looks segued from pretty (in a flared blue dress worn over black cropped leggings) to androgynous (cropped suit, jacket sleeves pushed up above her elbows, hat). She did street-style cool in nautical stripes, boyfriend jeans (probably her ex's) and a biker jacket. In the days of *Lucky Star* and *Holiday*, she offered an accessible rock-meets-Goth look that was rebellious but not offensive. Those cut-off fishnet stockings teamed with a miniskirt and a cropped slogan Tee, layered with stacked rubber and leather bracelets and one supersized long earring, were fashion-forward.

Then I saw the music clip for *Dress You Up In My Love*, from her *Like A Virgin* world tour. I had all the necessary pieces hanging in my wardrobe, from the cropped lace leggings and the matching lace miniskirt to multiple necklaces and stacked bracelets (sans the crucifix); bed hair came naturally to me; and a brown eye pencil helped recreate the beauty spot above the lip. The only thing I needed was the one print I didn't dig (psychedelic, man).

Madonna's paisley jacket was as colourful and overwhelming as you could get. But there was something almost regal (wait, she would become pop royalty) and unequivocally bold that made it covetable. It terrified me, but at the same time no one in my circle of friends had. And so I gave my mother a reference I found in a magazine and off she went to find a paisley print and lining as close to the Madonna version as she could, to be sewn to my exact measurements.

In the week leading up to the Icon presentation, I needed extra courage to embrace the paisley bit. Only Madonna could pull off such creative chaos, and I was but a student trying to get a decent grade from a teacher who wasn't my fan on a good day. Then I remembered how self-confidence took the Michigan native from obscurity to chart-topping star and I felt inspired to at least give it a try.

ONE WEEK LATER...

A single supersized long earring was the final touch before I entered the classroom. Anxiously I pressed play (miming to *Dress You Up In My Love*), and pretended the classroom was the stage and my classmates were my adoring fans. Determination and chutzpah resulted in plenty of laughter, and courage earned me an A. It also transformed me into a more adventurous dresser, who was not afraid to take a walk on the wild side of style.

The thing about Madonna and her style sensibility is that she doesn't just walk the new path, she maps it out, constructs it, and calls in style engineers and briefs them on how it needs to be done. Pushing boundaries, raising the bar, daring to do and embracing one's liberty to be her true self, unlike anyone else, is her trademark. It's this very sense of freedom that I tend to forget to apply to my daily life, and which I need to be reminded of from time to time. And I do when I shop; I look at how items are displayed in the windows or on my screen, and ask myself: Is this me? Do I really want to look like that? How does this item work with my style sensibility? I sometimes suffer epic fashion fails, and it takes bravery to admit that, and sometimes I am asked 'where did you buy that?' No matter which side of the velvet rope I find myself on, I am content knowing that I felt confident in the way that I dressed and looked when I left the house... And if I made people laugh, oh, well, embarrassment makes way for the idea that I did some good, too. But, knowing that I can always switch things up – wear those shoes with another outfit, or team the white blouse with skinny jeans instead – is a freedom, and that's key to a happy (and style-savvy) life.

Today, I find inspiration in other places and faces, but one thing remains true in my fashion time capsule: Madonna, often controversial and provocative, has revolutionised the way I look at life, being a woman, expressing myself verbally and with fashion.

And for the paisley, along the way, I added more wearable pieces into my wardrobe. This summer I acquired a sundress adorned with paisley and, for winter 2016, I have a kaftan dress embellished with the twisted droplet in burgundy and mauve. □



THAT paisley jacket!

I remember the day I first discovered Theo James, it was a hung-over Sunday and a fluke encounter with the film *Divergent* on DSTV. He was just what I needed, the mysterious Four and his make-me-melt hazel eyes. Suddenly, suicide Sunday felt better again.

James is unequivocally handsome, born in Oxford to a Greek father and a British mother, his milky Mediterranean skin fronts a well-heeled English accent that would make any woman swoon. The youngest of five siblings, James earned a degree in philosophy before studying acting at the British Old Vic Theatre School. You might remember him from his early career days as dreamy Turkish diplomat, Kemal Pamuk, who died of a heart attack while bonking Lady Mary in *Downton Abbey*. Now, with 10 films under his belt, and two Teen Choice Award wins for his role alongside Shailene Woodley in the film adaptations of Veronica Roth's dystopian sci-fi novels, *The Divergent Series*, James has become something of a fixture on the Hollywood circuit.

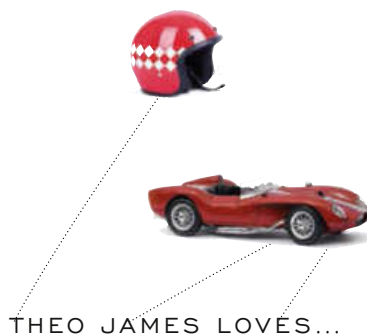
Dark, dreamy and drop dead gorgeous, *Holly Meadows* gets to know *Divergent Series* star, and the face of Boss The Scent, *Theo James*

T H E O

Although he flits in and out of Los Angeles, London is where James calls home, and staying grounded is high on his priority list. '[My] biggest challenges are having time to see family and friends, and also trying to keep in perspective what is important and what is not important. Because at the end of the day, you have to be mindful of who and what is important and sometimes you can get lost in the fun and the glamour, but it is essentially meaningless. What is real is the moment you are living in now, and your relationships and your family – they are the things that are lasting. Any material things and wealth are transient and don't last,' he says.

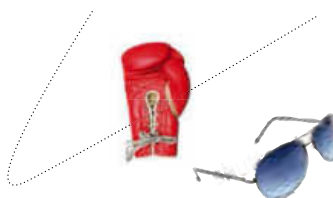
One way in which James keeps a level head in the slurry of celebrity is by staying well away from the ills of social media. Notoriously silent when it comes to the likes of Twitter and Instagram, tap in his name and you'll come across a host of fake accounts. 'I think it is important to keep that home and work boundary. Because otherwise you mush into this kind of pseudo-celebrity world and that is not something I am interested in... Trying too hard I think that is a big turn-off and having to share and shout about everything.' Instead, James values real, human connections. 'If someone has done something, say, you are in Mexico, right? It's interesting to find that out through conversation rather than having to be shown it via you showing me a picture of you on a lovely beach in Mexico.'

Despite his aversion to social media James has not succeeded in staying under the radar. This year, he landed his first fragrance campaign with Hugo Boss as the face of Boss The Scent. 'To me the brand is quite classic and masculine and there is a coolness to it. But it's also more reflective of my own perception of masculinity, a little bit of old school. Someone who steps back from the crowd and has a mystery about [them].' That said, maleness is not something that can be categorised or forced; from his father,



THEO JAMES LOVES...

- Old cars
- Riding motorcycles
- A good pair of sunglasses
- Books (he has just finished *Savage Harvest*)
- The *Godfather* Part I
- Irish actor Brendan Gleason
- Boxing
- Singing and playing guitar

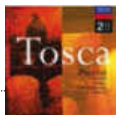


to Alexander McQueen and Bond star Sean Connery, these are men James looks up to and reveres. 'They are able to be seated in their own terms of self in their masculinity, rather than having to ram it down someone's throat with biceps and chanting voices.'

Old Hollywood icons such as Paul Newman and Connery embody style and elegance for James, but his ultimate style icon is his grandfather, who he talks about with fond words, reminiscing about a photograph from when he was in the navy in the '30s. The vintage frame shows him walking down the street wearing an impeccably tailored suit, with a pocket square, his hair done immaculately and his smile is bright, capturing the camera lens. 'To me, that always strikes off something personal and very poignant in terms of style, I think it looks very cool.' And a well-cut suit and classic, casual items that stand the test of time, like jeans and a bowler jacket

are James' closet go-tos. He feels naked without something on his wrist and has worn a watch since he was eight years old. 'The way you dress definitely has an effect on confidence... If you feel good and if you feel sharp then that is going to reflect how you come across,' he says. As for grooming (and let's be honest he doesn't need much), James' approach is minimal – a good sharp shaving ritual with some after balm suffices, a practice he learned to appreciate from when he was a student travelling in Mexico and he experienced the type of close shave, finished off by a palm pat-down with lemon juice. That, and a casual dose of six times weekly training including his great love, boxing, heavy weights and explosive start sprinting, make up James' regime for staying in shape.

But when it comes to talk of long-term girlfriend, British actress Ruth Kearney, and the threats of his on-set chemistry with Shailene Woodley, he remains silent. However if, like me, you dream of one day reeling in a man like James then you've got two words to remember; personal identity. 'What attracts me to women I guess would be a strong sense of self that's motivated by [her] own opinions, good taste and an ability to laugh at herself.' And, you could conveniently position yourself in some of his favourite hang-outs, which include The Albion pub and the French restaurant Little Ivy in North London, Islington's MMA ring, the National Portrait Gallery and Camden's iconic live music venue, the Roundhouse. Lusting aside, if James offers his fans one thing over and above eye candy and big screen entertainment, it's his outlook on life. Something of a philosopher, the words that most resonate with me are his opinions on the meaning of success. 'I think success is finally having satisfaction and I haven't reached it even myself. I am still constantly pushing, perhaps when I don't need to. But I think being able to enjoy the moment is success, really. Not many people manage to do that.' □



ON MY IPOD ...



Puccini, Tosca, Chef Baker, Coltrane, Mark Davis, The Stones



THE DAY I SAID

yes...

Getting engaged is a life-changing moment, ELLE invites seven women to recount *the day they said yes...*

'WE MADE A LUCID DECISION THAT MADE SENSE. WE WERE IN LOVE, BEST FRIENDS, AND WANTED TO HAVE SLEEPOVERS WITH EACH OTHER FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES'

AMY JEPHTA
PLAYWRIGHT AND DIRECTOR, CAPE TOWN

I never wanted my proposal to be a surprise. I'm a bit of a control freak in that way. We went about our engagement very clear-headedly. We talked a lot about what marriage meant to each of us, and then decided that it was what we wanted to do.

So the day I actually said yes was during a very serious conversation where we both admitted that 30 or 40 years from now we definitely still wanted to be part of one another's lives.

As for the ring, I knew I wanted something antique so we went looking for it together. We found a 1920s-style ring at a market in Woodstock that I loved; yet, he was still insistent that at least one part of it be a surprise – the actual proposal.

It became our joke for a few weeks. Whenever we had a 'moment', it would be like, 'is this it, are you proposing?' and he kept on saying, 'no, this isn't it.'

One evening, we took a drive and stopped at a spot overlooking Camps Bay, and that's when he popped the question. I think I'd given up on waiting for my lovely ring to be given back to me!

I wouldn't have wanted my engagement to be any other way. I felt like we did it on our terms, not the way it 'should' be done based on romantic comedies and reality shows. We made a lucid decision that made sense. We were in love, best friends, and wanted to have sleepovers with each other for the rest of our lives.





'THAT'S WHEN ADAM LAUNCHED INTO A MUMBLED CONFESSION OF LOVE FOR ME AND THRUST A BOX INTO MY LAP - A WOODEN PALM-SIZED BOX WITH A CUBAN FLAG PAINTED ON IT - THAT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO OPEN'



DAVINA KINDERSLEY
EVENTS CATERER, JOBURG

Antony told me that his mum had won a competition and the prize was a one-night stay at a hotel in Franschhoek

Upon arrival we were given bubbles, shown around the hotel, and told we had been upgraded to a suite. I suddenly felt a bit shabby and decided to change, do my hair and touch-up on my make-up, before we sat down for lunch.

The restaurant was quiet, with only one other (American) couple sitting on the outside balcony. Antony was a little fidgety but he said it was pre-holiday jitters. As soon as we stepped outside, he grabbed my hand and, being the amazing, kind man he is, told me how beautiful I was and how happy he was that we were together. He then reached inside his jacket pocket and that's when I clicked what was about to happen... He got down on one knee and said, 'I have been lying to you this whole time... My mum didn't win a competition. Will you marry me?'

I still can't remember everything that I did in that moment except for saying yes! We were then whisked off to the private wine cellar – where Antony was meant to propose originally but got too excited.

Antony designed the ring, which took him nearly an entire year. And I am more in love with the fact that he knew me so well; he knew what I wanted in a ring and a proposal when I didn't even have a clue myself!

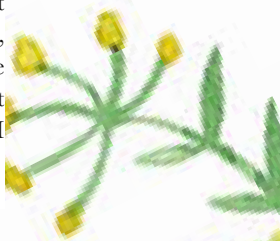
KITTY TREKI

WIFE AND MOTHER OF TWO, CAPE TOWN

We were in Cuba, on a long-awaited holiday together, and desperate to hit a beach and escape the madness that is Havana. We headed to Playa Pesquero (Fishermen's Beach), where we found a crazy resort filled with boozing honeymooners. The alcohol and meals were included in our resort price, as well as the heavily chlorinated swimming pools... It was disastrously unromantic.

Fortunately for us, the beach out front of the hotel was largely ignored by the party-loving crowd, so we turned our backs on the other tourists and found ourselves a patch of sand to call our own.

Later that evening, with minds swimming in complimentary gins, we headed to one of the many resort restaurants for lobster and sparkling wine. Adam started behaving most peculiarly, unable to complete his sentences nor sit still. I could only put his nuttiness down to him having had too much to drink. He insisted we skip dessert and head back to the beach. I would never say no to stargazing, and so we made our way back to the beach, and climbed up a lifesaver's chair that I had spied earlier that day. That's when Adam launched into a mumbled confession of love for me and thrust a box into my lap – a wooden palm-sized box with a Cuban flag painted on it – that was impossible to open. By then I had cottoned on to what was happening, and was getting really frustrated at the brain tease that opening the box presented. After groping around at the lid for what felt like forever, it finally shifted and I felt something drop to the floor, luckily not into the sand. Adam went down on one knee, and there we were in the Cuban moonlight with the water lapping metres away... And I said yes!





...EVERYTHING WITHIN ME SAID YES.'

BONOLO CEBE
CULTURAL AFFAIRS SPECIALIST, JOBURG

Everything about this day was perfectly orchestrated. The week before he proposed, his friend told me that he was about to propose to his woman and wanted me and my boyfriend to be part of their special moment.

I was overjoyed and under pressure to keep this secret from her. We planned to go on a cruise for their engagement, and suggested we dress up for the occasion, so that we could take photos and create memories. I wore a cute navy and white striped dress and she wore a coral maxi dress. We were both very excited for what was going to be the most perfect day.

On the cruise, my man couldn't stop staring at me. I remember that look, it was the same look he had the first time we had dinner (the same look he has each time he says he loves me).

Anxiously awaiting their proposal, I was suddenly called up to the stage. Overwhelmed and confused, I turned around and saw the love of my life on one knee, bearing the most beautiful piece of jewellery I had ever seen. He asked me to marry him, and in that emotionally-charged moment everything within me said yes. It really was the biggest surprise of my life, and all those important to me were in on it.



LAUREN CIKARA, SAFE SCHOOLS MANAGER,
COLORADO, USA

Midway through our trip to South Africa, from Port Elizabeth to Cape Town, my partner Amy and I explored the Garden Route. Each day, instead of taking the usual touristy photos, we decided to select a Lego figurine and take photos of them along the scenic route.

At the end of our first day, we checked into an amazing guesthouse in Knysna, but couldn't really enjoy the scenic views because of the heavy rain and fog. The next morning, just as the fog was lifting, and shortly before we were set to make our way to Hermanus, Amy snuck away from breakfast back to our room. When I came down to the room, she lured me to the balcony under the guise of taking photos, and there I spotted her Lego-of-the-day with a sign that read: Will you marry me? Needless to say, I (and my Lego-of-the-day) said, yes!

Amy bought me a beautiful silver chain Tiffany & Co. ring, and once we got to Hermanus, I bought her a silver band. We celebrated the engagement with family and friends throughout our South African trip before heading back to the USA.





'THE LAWYER IN ME MUST HAVE QUESTIONED HIM FOR ABOUT FIVE MINUTES BEFORE SAYING YES!'



MONTY MOLOTLEGI
ONLINE EDITOR, CAPE TOWN

ASANDA KHUMALO*
LAWYER, JOBURG

We got engaged in an art gallery in Newtown a day after my 25th birthday. I was convinced that we were going out for a quick dinner, little did I know that I'd be asked the question that would mark a new chapter in my life – our lives – then and there.

It was a hectic Wednesday afternoon and I was contemplating whether I should even go.

We walked inside the gallery and one of the artists showed us around, explaining what each art piece was about. We arrived at a specific piece, which looked like four pieces combined, and upon further inspection I realised that each piece had a word written on it. As I looked closer the words were 'will', 'you', 'marry', 'me'. Soon after, something bright caught my eyes, and before I knew it he was on his knee.

The lawyer in me must have questioned him for about five minutes before saying yes! Our friends, who witnessed everything, came out of their hiding places, congratulated us, and wished us well in our walk together.

* *name changed*

Mine was the unconventional proposal. We proposed to each other. We had a discussion, a conversation if you will, about our future, and whether we wanted to spend it together.

There was no getting on one knee and ring in the glass business, or a romantic candle lit dinner, we were lying in bed one Sunday morning and asked each other the big question: Should we get married? It was a question that we had discussed several times, over many dinners, but realised that we should maybe take it to the next step and actually tie the knot. In our PJs, and before a cup of coffee, we deliberated just to ensure that we were both on the same page moving forward. And we really were.

It was very clear that we were right for each other because we both replied yes. The engagement was christened with a romantic weekend away with friends to Pearly Beach, just outside of Hermanus. Next on the list was the hunt for rings, and we were very specific that we wanted Russian wedding bands. Proving to be too costly, we decided to have replica versions made, intertwined in silver that signified holy matrimony.

The day I said yes may seem very unromantic to most but it was perfect for me.

JOIN IN THE CONVERSATION

We want to hear your stories of the day you said yes! Email jaime@elle.co.za and we'll publish the best on ELLE.co.za



A B O U T



There's an element of quirk and intrigue about Ty Hunter, there has to be, considering the creativity that goes into styling one of music's most influential stars, Beyoncé. Dressed in an all-black ensemble of harem pants and sweatshirt worn around his waist, you can see originality down to the tank he chose to wear: crown-topped cartoon characters, reminiscent of Charlie Brown and Snoopy, accessorised with stacked chains. Stacked bangles adorn his arms, too. It's statement-making yet relaxed, in keeping with his personality and vibe. 'I've always been that way,' he says. 'I try to send out a positive vibe; it makes life stress-free for me,' he says.

The first time we connect is while Hunter is in LA: 'I wanted to be sure my Skype is fine because I always forget my password,' he says when he appears on my screen. Nine days later we connect again while Hunter is prepping for an event in New York.

It's almost time for him to go, but he seems unfazed by time; details (except Skype passwords) matter most. 'What do you think about this look?' he asks, pointing to a little white ribbon sewn onto the lower left side of his jacket. 'Should I take it off or leave it?' he asks, dressed in an all-black ensemble, accessorised with a black-and-white bangle. 'I added the bracelet because of the white ribbon, but I feel it's unnecessary.' And off he cuts the white ribbon with mini scissors.

It's creative madness rolling out right in front of me; Hunter's energy balances between genius and impulsivity, where things just happen. 'Everything sort of happened by chance... I was working as a window dresser in Houston, Texas, for [a store called] Buiyahkah when I met Ms. Tina, Beyoncé's mum; this was in 1995,' he says, while trying to decide on which shoes to wear. 'We became

very good friends, and stayed in touch. I would call her each time we unpacked new clothes that I thought would work for Destiny's Child. One day she came into the boutique and said, "I'm going to get you out of this store", but I didn't really believe her.'

A few months later, things took a dramatic turn for the better; 'I called [Tina] and asked whether she needed anything from me, and the next thing I knew I was doing the Grammys. Everything just took off from there.' But it wasn't all smooth sailing from the word go. 'The designers were not receptive initially. It was very difficult to pull clothes, but Miss Tina did an excellent job with Destiny's Child; she created a lot of amazing looks,' he says. This was about 17 years ago before Beyoncé went solo. 'It's been a long journey, a roller coaster ride. It was a great time. The girls have grown up and are doing extremely well for themselves.'

Beyoncé has grown indeed, and built a career of her own, broke records and garnered major social media buzz for the clothes that she wears on the red carpet, something Hunter is definitely part of. Most recently, he was behind the star's much talked about ensemble worn at this year's China: Through the Looking Glass-themed Met Gala.

The process isn't always smooth: 'We agree and disagree,' he says candidly. 'Especially when it comes to the Met Gala. This year Riccardo Tisci came up with the sketches; there are usually like a million sketches, then we break it down to one, two or three that she might like, and we take it from there. Then he has to bring it to life; this is followed by numerous fittings and *boom!* We have the Met Gala dress,' he adds. 'And while it's the designer's vision of what the theme is, the designer, the client, and the stylist

Known for styling
head-turning looks
for *Beyoncé*, fashion
director, stylist and
designer, *Ty Hunter*
reflects on working with
the music and style
icon, and *launching*
his shirt line

words DIMEJI ALARA



Ty Hunter and assistant Raquel presenting looks to Tina Knowles backstage

all have to come together. But most importantly, she has to be comfortable with it. And this particular look was a good one,' he says of the bespoke peekaboo crystals and stones embellished haute couture Givenchy gown she wore, topped by 'that' ponytail that was, in fact, a last minute tweak.

With so many looks on the red carpet, it's tough to single out one look, but perhaps it's that fatherly instinct in him [Hunter has a 20-year-old daughter who is in college, whom he adores and admires] that leads him to the pregnancy-reveal look from 2011, when a beaming Beyoncé hugged her beautiful baby bump dressed in an off-the-shoulder, floor-length orange Lanvin dress. 'I was so relieved that I didn't have to hide it anymore!'

Through all those best-dressed moments, Hunter is sentimental about meeting the great Nelson Mandela while in South Africa with Beyoncé. 'We had Thanksgiving with him before he passed away. It was a splendid time. I was in awe of him. I couldn't believe that I'd met him — and still can't. I will never have the right words to describe that moment. It's still one of my best feelings ever.'

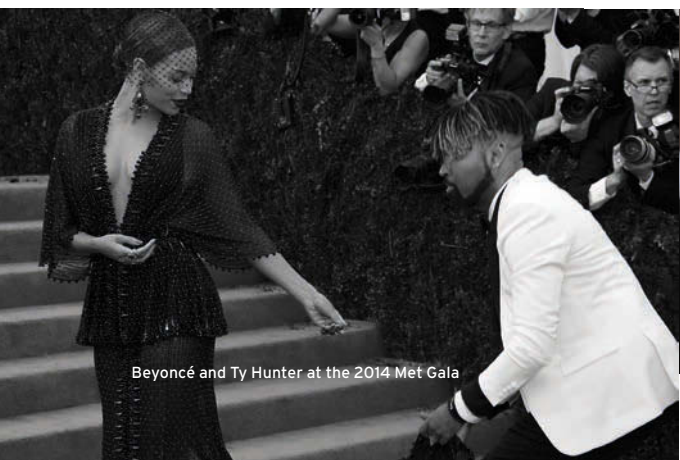
Away from the Bey spotlight, Hunter is celebrating another milestone of which he speaks proudly: the launch of his unisex shirt line, With Passion by Ty Hunter. He started the line immediately after

the On the Run Tour with Beyoncé, in November 2014, because he wanted to do something different, so when the opportunity presented itself he took it. 'The shirt is an important element in everyone's wardrobe. There are days you just want to throw on something without the headache of trying to decide what to wear,' he says. Naomi Campbell showed her support. 'I want to send you a picture of me in your shirt, because you're special,' the supermodel told Hunter.

Working with Bey means his skills and vision are always under the media's watchful eyes, yet he remains calm under pressure — and grounded. 'It's not difficult to stay grounded. People used to say I was too nice, but I think it's just who I am. So I try not to let anything strip me off of that and make me into something that I'm not. I'm just built this way I guess.' And it's that level headedness and relaxed approach to life that's made him Bey's go-to man, who's shaping the red carpet one head-turning look at a time. □



Ty Hunter and Raquel backstage during a fitting



Beyoncé and Ty Hunter at the 2014 Met Gala

PHOTOGRAPHY: TAI WASHINGTON / COURTESY OF TY HUNTER

SCENTS

AND SCENTSABILITY

Play with us & find which scent you should be wearing *this summer!*

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WHO IS YOUR SMALL SCREEN ALTER-EGO?

Amy Schumer in *Inside Amy Schumer*

Alicia Florrick in *The Good Wife*

Olivia Pope in *The Fixer*

POOLSIDE READ

Play Big
Tara Mohr

The perfect read if you are looking to step out and take big steps in achieving the best in your work endeavours.

God Help the Child
Toni Morrison

A coming of age story about a woman learning to love and accept herself despite challenges faced.

Why Not Me
Mindy Kaling

In her second book, Kaling writes about her search for work and personal life balance, with a healthy dose of comedy.

SOCIAL NETWORK OF CHOICE


DRINK OF CHOICE

A glass of Shiraz


Gin and Tonic

Pomegranate Mojito


MOST LIKELY TO BE LISTENING TO...



Rihanna *Anti-Rihanna*



Jessie J *Sweet Talker*



Taylor Swift *1989*

FRIDAY NIGHT PLANS



At home eating take-away sushi while catching up on all the series from the past week




Dancing all night




The hottest live music place in town like the Orbit in Johannesburg or Straight No Chaser in Cape Town


BAG OF CHOICE



A designer tote along the lines of a classic LV Monogram



A practical and stylish leather cross body bag



A fold-over clutch

PRETTY POWERFUL



Stylish and elegant, you are a natural leader. You hold a great world-view and are not afraid to stand up for what you believe in, even if it means putting up a fight.

Givenchy Dahlia Divin

INTENSE AND ALLURING



You are brazen and self-assured, not afraid to take risks, while kicking some serious butt along the way. You ask the questions that no one else dares to, and you're not at all interested in being anything but true to yourself.

Calvin Klein ck one

FUN AND FABULOUS



Wise, smart, funny and unapologetically you. Always pushing boundaries, everyone knows they can count on you to shake up a dull moment with your witty one-liners. You believe that life is short and you are here to live it!

Marc Jacobs Decadence

And the scent is... that's made for you

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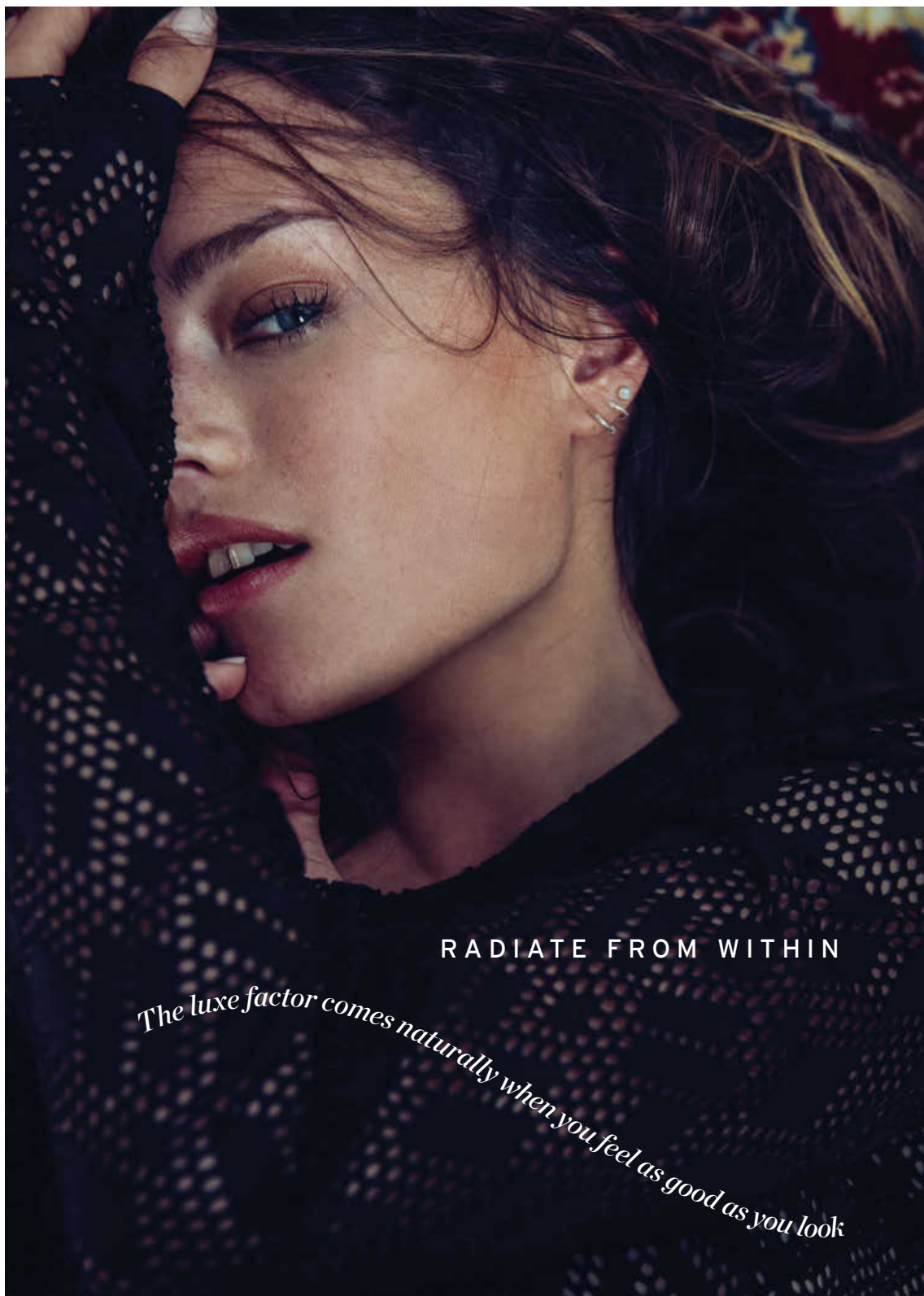
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ELLE FASHION



RADIATE FROM WITHIN

The luxe factor comes naturally when you feel as good as you look

S H I N E



fashion TARRYN OPPEL

photography ELFORD / DE LA FORÊT

A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a black sleeveless dress and large, ornate, multi-tiered earrings with gold and dark stones. She is looking down and to the left. The background is plain white.

Sophisticated
silhouettes
and *luxurious fabrics*
set the
tone for precious
stones,
plated metals
and
delicate chains

Dress, R14 990,
Burberry; chandelier
earrings, R3 050,
Lulu Belle


opposite
Jacket, R5 995, Emporio
Armani; ear-cuffs,
R2 395 each, both
Sloane and Madison;
right hand: stacking ring,
R499 (for a set of five),
Mimco; v-stacked rings,
R1 519 (for a set of
three), Swarovski; pearl
ring, R6 900, Louis
Vuitton; left hand:
stacking ring, R499 (for
a set of five), Mimco;
large v-ring,
R5 050, and small
v-ring, R6 900, both
Louis Vuitton



Top, R5 350, Emporio Armani; chandelier earrings, R199, Zara; Sterling silver toggle bracelet, R999, American Swiss; cuff, R799, Mimco



Lace top, R12 600, Burberry; chandelier beaded earrings, R699, Mimco; necklace, R299, Topshop



Sleeveless blazer, R859, Zara; drop princess cut earrings, R11 800, Scarab; raw stone set brass pendant necklace, R950, raw stone rings, from R650, and raw stone cuff, R700, all Matter of Fakt; gold bangle, R4 990, Kirsten Goss; wrap snake bangle, R3 339, Gas at Spilhaus; two-tone stone ring, R499 (for a set of two), Mimco

opposite

Jumpsuit, R5 130, Michael Maven; short necklace, R6 200, and long necklace, R18 100, both Louis Vuitton

PHOTOGRAPHY: ELFORD / DE LA FORÊT AT AGENT EMMA / PHOTOGRAPHERS' ASSISTANTS:
RUIAN VAN JAARSVELDT, KYIE WEEKS / FASHION DIRECTOR: TARRYN OPPEL / HAIR: NATASHA
PAPADOPOULOS C/O SNCM / MAKEUP: LINDA O'CONNELL AT GLOSS / FASHION INTERN: JENNA
MAREEKIRLING / MODEL: JENNA PAT ICE





fashion TARRYN OPPEL

photography BETINA DU TOIT

A person is sitting on a blue surface, wearing a dark dress with intricate gold leaf patterns. The background is a bright, hazy sky. A large, white, stylized letter 'D' is superimposed over the image, framing the text.

CO *DRESS* E

*Staying home and playing dress-up
isn't such a bad idea, especially when
the party starts and you're not ready*

Dress, R3 600, Kat van Duinen





Dress, R9 999, Thula Sindi
OPPOSITE
Dress, R1 420, Tart; briefs,
R225, Devota





Jacket, R3 600, and skirt,
R3 800, both Kiūk CGDT
OPPOSITE
Dress, R6 999 at Paluu



Top, R2 800, and skirt, R4 150,
both Michael Maven
OPPOSITE
Dress, R6 599, Thula Sindi





PHOTOGRAPHY: BETINA DU TOIT / PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANT: GHUSAIN RATCLIFF / FASHION DIRECTOR: TARRYN
OPPEL / HAIR AND MAKEUP: NANDIKAI C/O SNCM / FASHION INTERN: PAIGH DOS SANTOS / MODEL: JESSICA AT ICE



GO ONLINE
*for behind-the-scenes
pics*



Bra, R225, Devota; skirt, R10 000,
Stefania Morland

OPPOSITE
Dress, R51 200, Roberto Cavalli at
Catherine Gaeyla Fashion


A woman with dark skin is sitting on the bow of a dark red boat. She is wearing a blue captain's hat with a gold chain, a white and blue striped one-piece swimsuit, a wide silver bracelet, and blue slip-on shoes with white soles. She is looking directly at the camera. The boat has gold-colored railings and a spotlight. The background is the blue water of the sea.

Coastal Cruising

The new nautical is modernly minimal.
On the forefront is navy, white and stripes,
complimented by playful accessories

Fashion: ANNE-MARIE CURTIS

Photography: BJARNE JONASSON



Cotton top, Sandro; bikini
bottom, Zimmermann


opposite
Playsuit, Chanel; denim-
mix shoes, Jimmy Choo;
denim-mix hat, Eugenia
Kim; pearl and metal
bracelet, Chanel Playsuit,
Chanel; denim-mix shoes,
Jimmy Choo; denim-mix
hat, Eugenia Kim; pearl
and metal bracelet,
Chanel





Top and skirt, both
J.W. Anderson; shoes,
Tabitha; hat, Beach
Flamingo

opposite
Dress, Gucci;
sunglasses, Preen;
earring, model's own



Tunic, Hermès; silver and lapis bracelet, and silver and agate bracelet, both Stanmore

opposite
Jumpsuit, Sonia Rykiel;
cotton-mix shoes, Emma Cook; hat, Moncler;
earring, model's own

PHOTOGRAPHY: BARNIE JONASSON / HAIR: HAILEY BRISKE AT RED ROOT LIVING BUNNIE AND
BUNNIE / MAKEUP: AUREY GALLIMORE AT CUM HAIR AND MAKE UP FOR NARS COSMETICS /
MODEL: JASMINE LOOKS AT WIG LONDON / PRODUCTION: SELECT PRODUCTION / SHOOT ON
LOCATION AT THE STANDARD, MIAMI BEACH

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*to get the new
nautical look*

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ELLE BEAUTY



PRETTY LITTLE PARCELS

Fragrance fun, lovely lips and fitness tips, here are the sweet things that come with the season of good cheer



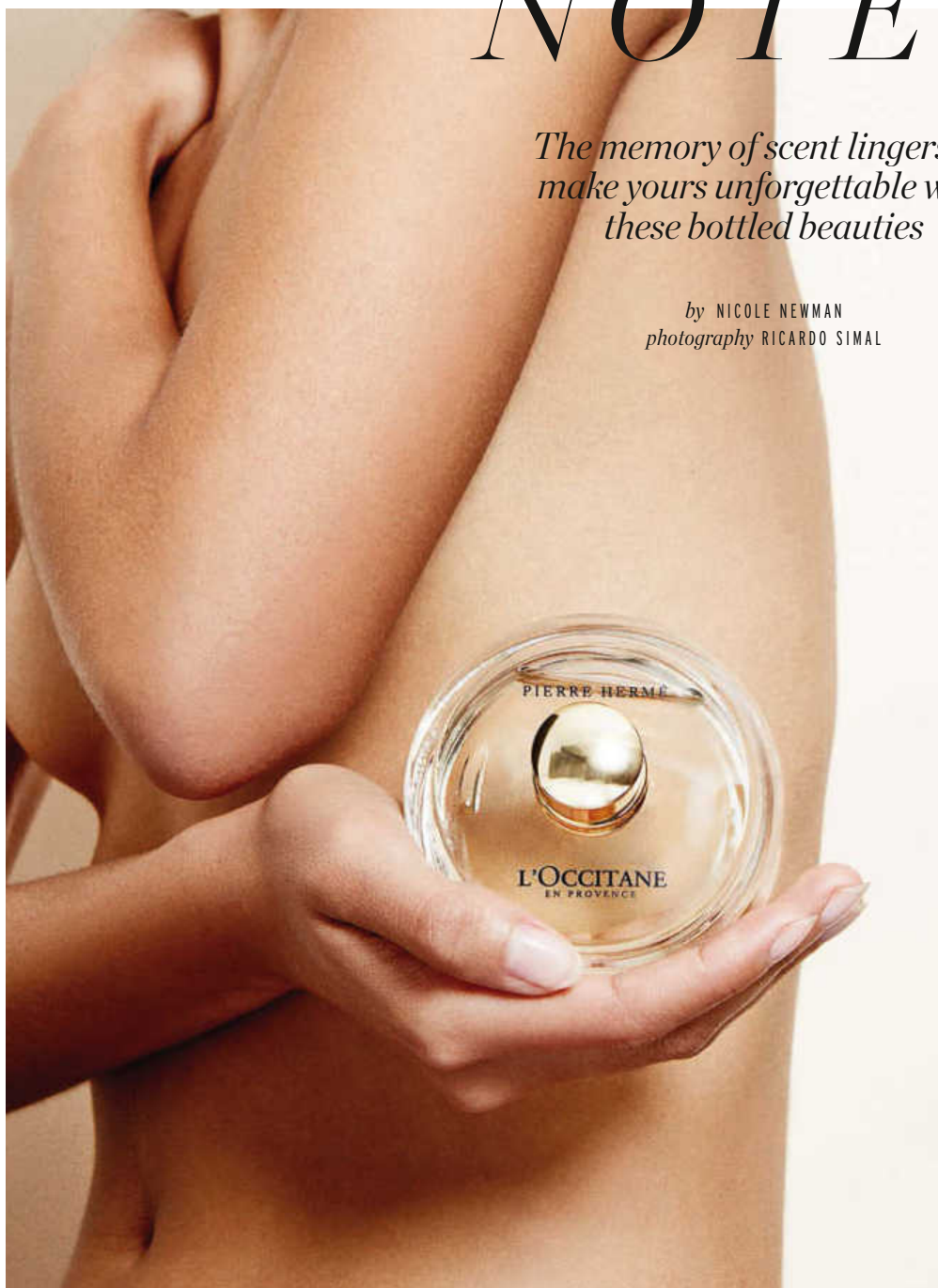
BVLGARI GOLDEA, R1 375

THE SCENT OF A GODDESS
FROM FRUITY TOP NOTES TO
LONG-LASTING VELVETY
BASE NOTES

TOP NOTES

*The memory of scent lingers, so
make yours unforgettable with
these bottled beauties*

by NICOLE NEWMAN
photography RICARDO SIMAL



L'OCCITANE JASMINE IMMORTELLE NEROLI, R800

SPICY NOTES OF PINK PEPPER SOFTENED BY DELICATE JASMINE, THIS PERFUME HOLDS THE PROMISE OF A LONG, ADVENTUROUS SUMMER



ALAÏA PARIS, RI 625

PARADOXICAL SCENTS OF PINK PEPPER, PEONY AND MUSK.
INSPIRED BY THE POWER OF FEMININITY

GIVENCHY ANGE OU DÉMON LE PARFUM & ACCORD ILLICITE, R1175

AN ELEGANT MIX OF MUSK, AMBER, PATCHOULI AND WHITE LEATHER
MAKE THIS A MULTI-LAYERED SCENT



VIKTOR & ROLF BONBON, R1 445

WITH CARAMEL AS ITS KEY NOTE, BONBON IS ALL
ABOUT SELF-INDULGENCE AND CELEBRATION





CHLOÉ LOVE STORY, R1170

A CLEAN, FRESH AND FLORAL SCENT
INSPIRED BY PARISIAN ROMANCE AND
THE LOCK OF LOVE-SHAPED BOTTLE



PRADA CANDY KISS, R535

A FUN-LOVING FRAGRANCE WITH CARAMEL AT ITS BASE – CANDY HITS THE SWEET SPOT

ESCADA JOYFUL MOMENTS, R865

A FEMININE FRAGRANCE WITH FRESH AND SWEET NOTES THAT INSPIRE JOYFUL EMOTIONS

BURBERRY MY BURBERRY, R845

THE MIXTURE OF FRUITY FLORAL ACCORDS SIGNIFIES THE SCENT OF A GARDEN AFTER RAINFALL



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GO ONLINE

*for a one-on-one with the
nose of Carolina Herrera*

CAROLINA HERRERA CH, R1 000

AN ELEGANT HEART OF FLORAL NOTES WITH
BULGARIAN ROSE AND JASMINE



MARC JACOBS DAISY DREAM, R1 030

MADE WITH THE SPIRIT OF DAISIES AND BLUE SKIES –
THIS ONE'S FOR THE DREAMERS



MICHAEL KORS GOLD COLLECTION, R1 295 EACH

FLORAL NOTES ALL THE WAY THROUGH AND A FUN
ATTITUDE TO MATCH – THE SKY'S THE LIMIT



PROFESSIONAL OPINION

'With summer in full swing, it's time to celebrate a natural, healthy glow, and the essence of this look is well-moisturised skin. A look that will see you through the season, for an evening update, just add your choice of lip colour.'

– Sebastine Pepler, make-up artist

GET THE LOOK

the fresh-faced

FLAWLESS FINISH

The *natural* look gets the beauty seal of approval this summer. So keep your skin looking *healthy*, and your face relatively *make-up free* in six easy steps

Step 1: Moisturise your skin using a hydrating moisturiser.

The Rejuvenate Range from Intraceuticals adds instant moisture, minimises soft lines and gives a great glow.

Step 2: Mix a small amount of foundation (you still want to be able to see the skin) with an SPF booster as protection is paramount. Apply concealer around the nose and slightly under the eye area.

Step 3: Add a small amount of liquid highlighter on the nose bone and cupid's bow. Don't over-apply - the whole idea is to add a slight glow and not have your skin looking shiny.

Step 4: Using a cream blush lightly buff some colour onto the apples of your cheeks, eyelids and lips.

Step 5: Line your inner lash line with brown eyeliner, and add two coats of waterproof mascara.

Step 6: Comb your eyebrows upwards and set them in place with a brow gel. If you don't have a brow gel, use a bit of hair spray on a recycled mascara wand. □



We've used

1. Intraceuticals Moisture Binding Cream, R1 000
2. Rimmel Match Perfection Foundation, R150
3. Environ RAD Water Resistant Anti-Oxidant Sunscreen, R195
4. Benefit High Beam, R325
5. Dior Fix It 2-in-1 Prime and Conceal, R505
6. Bobbi Brown Pot Rouge, R390
7. Chanel Long-Lasting Eyeliner Erable, R370
8. Dolce & Gabbana Shaping Eyebrow Pencil Mocha, R400
9. MAC Haute & Naughty Waterproof Lash, R240



Lipidol is a range of six new oils for daily skincare. Featured product: Lipidol After Shower Oil 175ml. Supplements the skin's natural oily layer stripped away by daily washing. Available at selected Clicks stores at the recommended retail price of R79.95. lipidol.com

BEAUTY

best buys

With targeted delivery of concentrated active ingredients straight to the skin, serums are fast becoming our *faces' best friends*

THE ALL-IN-ONE Clinique Smart Custom- Repair Serum, R725

This multi-purpose gem diminishes lines and wrinkles, firms and lifts the skin, reduces dark spots and uneven skin, while improving the skin's texture all at once. Use twice daily, with no more than 2-3 pumps, to improve your skin's particular needs.

ART OF ANTI-AGEING Chanel Sublimage L'Extrait Serum, R6 950

Less is more for Chanel, whereby a few drops regenerate and repair the skin, while targeting fine lines and wrinkles. The precious vanilla planifolia plant hydrates and replenishes moisture.

IN FULL BLOOM Dior Capture Totale, R2 305

Dior Capture Totale boosts skin's natural plump volumes with its key ingredient, Longoza extract - a flower manually harvested from the Dior Garden. The plant synchronises cells that aid in restoring a youthful look.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE Estée Lauder New Dimensions Shape + Fill Expert Serum, R1 300

Ideal for all skin types, this serum aims to redefine facial contouring by lifting cheeks and jawlines. The lifted skin and natural fullness creates an enhanced facial volume, while firming up elasticity.

STRENGTHENING SKIN BOOSTER Elizabeth Arden Superstart Skin Renewal Booster, R720

Every-day UVA and UVB damage diminishes the skin's ability to retain moisture. Designed to help restore the skin's surface layer, it also aids with moisture retention, while securing its natural ability to protect itself.



GO ONLINE
for the science
behind serums

The product
most recommended
by doctors for scars
& stretch marks.

Ipsos, 2014



"I was first introduced to Bio-Oil after I cut my leg while hiking. A friend recommended using Bio-Oil as soon as the wound had healed and I am so grateful for her advice! Thanks to Bio-Oil, the scar is now just a faint line which I rarely think about. Then, 3 or 4 weeks back, I decided to try it on my face – I've been an outdoors person all my life and have more than my share of dry, tired-looking skin. Well, my skin feels much smoother and looks positively radiant! Needless to say, Bio-Oil now has a permanent place in my medicine cabinet!" Fiona Stewart

eau TO KNOW...

Viktor & Rolf Flowerbomb, R1 445 for 50ml

FLORAL IMPRESSION
Sambac jasmine, Cattleya orchid, pulpy freesia and Centifolia rose

EARTHY TOP NOTE
Bergamot

THE INSPIRATION
The designers' fervent desire to create a luxurious weapon of love

THE FACE
Isabeli Fontana

PROVOCATIVE ACCORD
Patchouli and sweet vanilla

THE DESIGNERS
Duo Viktor Horsting and Rolf Snoeren

THE BOTTLE
Designed by Fabien Baron in the shape of a luxurious, feminine and powerful diamond grenade

A floral explosion, Viktor & Rolf Flowerbomb is opulent and sophisticated. Ten years later, it has a cult following and ranks 13th among the world's feminine fragrances

SPRITZ ON before going to see the Archibald John Motley Jr. exhibition at the Whitney Museum in New York **WHILE WEARING** a full-skirt, structured jacket and oversized earrings **IT ALSO PAIRS WITH** a smile, happy thoughts, and a fierce attitude **YOU'LL WANT TO SPLURGE ON** one-of-a kind fashion finds **AS YOU POUR** a Rose Caipiroska; fresh lime, mint, Monin rose, vodka and soda **TURN UP** *Flying Dutchman* by Tori Amos **STROLL DOWN THE STREET THINKING** 'I am edgy, explosive and ultra-feminine.'

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GO ONLINE

to discover the new
Viktor & Rolf Spice
Bomb fragrance

TORI AMOS





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BEAUTY BRIEF

the red lip

Finding the *right shade of red* is your first step towards mastering this bold, sexy look. A timeless beauty must-have, we show you how to *get the red lip look right*

PREPARATION



APPLICATION



PREPARATION

When it comes to red, there are two base colours you need to remember: orange (warm) and blue (cool). The latter generally looks better on women with darker skin, while a paler skin tone calls for an orange-base red. Before deciding whether this look is right for you or not, wear your red on three different occasions, and if you are still not feeling it, move on to a different shade of lipstick. If by the third time you really don't want to take it off, congratulations, you have just found your new beauty best friend. Red lipstick is powerful and sexy, and makes your smile fuller, and at times, your skin seem flawless.

1. Chanel Rouge Allure Velvet 51 La Boulversante, R505
2. Estée Lauder Pure Color Envy Decisive Poppy, R345
3. Revlon Ultra HD Lipstick Gladiolus, R155

APPLICATION

Ensuring the longevity of your red is paramount to this process. Once you've identified a red that matches your skin tone, remember to always wear it with a small amount of foundation applied to your mouth area, as it creates a flawless canvas for the colour. If your lips are dry, apply a lip primer before lining them with a pencil, which also helps with the removal of the lipstick later on. Using a red or nude lip pencil, trace the lines of your top and bottom lips, and colour in the inner corners. Take your slanted nib and, starting at the 'V' of your top lip, stroke the lipstick outwards and then across your bottom lip. Blot with a tissue, then apply a second coat of lipstick. Keep your lipstick on hand for touch-ups throughout the day, and don't forget to check your teeth for any lipstick stains.

1. Topshop Lip Primer in Everlast, R149
2. L'Oréal Color Riche Lip Liner Scarlet Rouge, R130
3. Catrice Long Lasting Lip Pencil in Sweet Nothing, R35

WEAR IT WELL



WEAR IT WELL

If you're a first time red-wearer consider a satin-finish lipstick. This is the happy medium between a lip tint or a gloss and a creamy matte-finish red that will keep your lips hydrated, and looking chic.

For a subtle take on the look, pick a lip stain, or create your own by blotting a single coat of red lipstick well with a tissue. When wearing a red lip by day, keep the rest of your make-up muted, and at night add a simple black liner. But it's your attitude that matters most: whatever shade of red you love, wear it with confidence. □



GO ONLINE
for five of our
favourite red
lipstick quotes

1. MAC Ruby Woo, R210
2. Dolce & Gabbana Classic Cream Lipstick in Devil, R540
3. Lancôme Rouge In Love Rouge in Love, R325

MEET ME HALFWAY

Work your way up to red with brick red or cranberry hues instead.

1. Inglot Rouge à Lèvres Slim Gel 44, R199
2. MAC Mineralize Rich Lipstick Everyday Diva, R275
3. Clinique Colour Pop in Cherry Pop, R275
4. Bionike Defence Colour Lipstick, R95





GO ONLINE
for YouTube gym
routines to follow

get MOVING

I'M TOO TIRED

Now, more than ever, the demands on our lives are greater, and the pressure takes its toll on our energy levels. Ironically, by making time for some form of exercise in our daily routines, we are energising ourselves. When we exercise our body releases endorphins that make us feel more positive, mobile, and happy throughout the day. Ever heard of a runner's high? You can thank endorphins for that overwhelming sense of excitement.

I WANT TO, BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME

If there are not enough hours in the day to get yourself to the gym (all while feeling excited about it), fear not. Say hello to YouTube work-out routines, and rising online instructors such as Kayla Itsines. Find a routine that targets the areas you want to focus on, and get training. All you need is a small space and your body strength. Most online training programmes are approximately 20 minutes long.

I DON'T LIKE GOING TO GYM ALONE

The first time you walk inside a gym or a class can be intimidating, but it's worth noting that every single person in that class or environment had her/his first day too. To make that first step more comfortable, find a friend who is into training and will motivate you until you are more at ease with doing it on your own. If mainstream gyms are too congested, look for smaller, more intimate exercising spots instead.

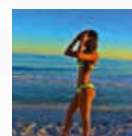
GOING TO GYM IS TOO EXPENSIVE

Joining a gym or a specialised class is costly, but the good news is that you don't need a membership to get in shape; instead, make the most out of your personal space. Go for a run around your neighbourhood; start off with a three kilometres run and increase it with time. You could also join a running club, especially if you need motivation or company.

Are you running out of excuses as to why you cannot train? Read these and get moving, says *Nicole Newman*

I FIND EXERCISE BORING

Running on a treadmill can be boring, so look for alternative classes that will keep you more engaged. Look at an aerobics dance class, such as Zumba, or spinning, boot camp and boxing that will keep you motivated. Hosted by energetic instructors with a killer soundtrack, these specialised classes are guaranteed to keep you moving. □



@jenselter



@mistyonpointe

MAKE EXERCISING EASIER BY

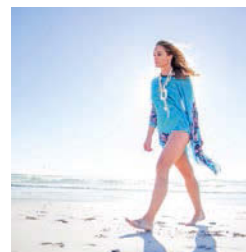
- Preparing your gym clothes/bag the night before.
- Booking your class online, ahead of time, making it harder to back out of a session.
- Setting small goals that are achievable, making your journey more exciting.
- Following inspiring people such as @jenselter and @mistyonpointe for much-needed motivation throughout the day.
- Choosing a gym/class/running route that works with your lifestyle (either close to home or work, depending on your preference).

OUR TOP 5 MOTIVATIONAL BLOGS

girlsgonestrong.com, fitbottomedgirls.com, negharfonooni.com, runtothefinish.com, livelifeactive.com

A la

What we eat and how we stay in shape influences our lives both physically and mentally. *Nicole Newman* invites five successful women to share their daily eating and fitness routines



LARA ROUX, YOGA INSTRUCTOR

Cape Town-based Lara Roux is a yoga instructor and a (secret) restaurant lover who doesn't believe in diets, instead she opts for a healthy eating-healthy living routine. Her stay-slim tips include finding wholesome produce, exploring the outdoors, and allowing herself time to indulge in our most precious habit: sleep. 'Food should satisfy natural cravings as they occur – from lots of greens, to sufficient protein, some good fats and a piece of cocoa-heavy dark chocolate. **BREAKFAST** includes first and foremost a rye rusk and coffee. A banana before and a green juice after yoga class. **LUNCH** is usually a salad (the Lifebowl at The Shala is amazing) and a protein smoothie with a bag of nuts. **DINNER** is a freshly-caught fish serving steamed Thai-style with a bowl of greens or steamed vegetables, or fresh pasta with homemade sauce. I splurge probably too often, but it also depends on what you consider to be cheating. Freshly baked bread with olive oil and balsamic vinegar, a thin-crust pizza, or a block of chocolate (or two). I believe in guilt-free eating, and eating in moderation. I snack on natural seasonal produce, seed bars, or a good quality protein bar. Exercising entails mountain walks, especially in the Western Cape. I enjoy a Barre class or sessions with a skipping rope occasionally, swimming in the ocean despite how cold the water is, and yoga, of course!'

MELODY MOLALE, BLOGGER AND FASHION STYLIST

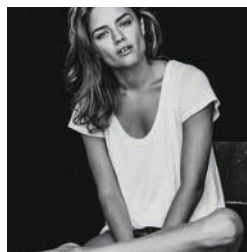
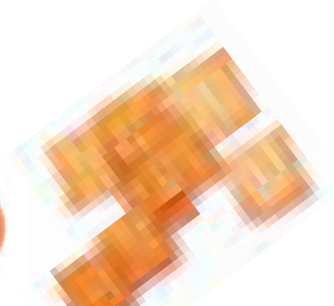
Fashion blogger Melody Molale relies on a balanced diet and a lot of water to keep her on the go. Not afraid of indulging in a burger, she swears by portion control, carrots, and, occasionally, chocolate cake. 'Food should be anything you want it to be. Whatever you eat, do so in moderation. Small portions are always a good idea too. **BREAKFAST** includes either bran flakes or muesli with milk or yoghurt. I used to skip breakfast but having learnt that it is the most important meal you'll have all day, I make time for mine. **LUNCH** is usually pasta or a chicken salad. It is heavier than my other meals as I tend to be hungrier during the day probably because I burn more energy. **DINNER** is lighter than my other meals, and I love seafood so I often have salmon or prawn. I splurge on weekends, Sunday, to be precise, when I am most relaxed. And on my birthday! I have the worst sweet tooth so chocolate cake is my ultimate treat. And I snack on grapes and tangerines. Exercising entails nothing too intense. Running on the treadmill for 10 minutes two to three times a week.'





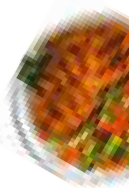
JADE KIRKEL, MARKETING MANAGER AND MOTHER OF ONE

Not just a mother to her three-year-old daughter, but also the marketing manager of the family-owned The Sorbet Group, Jade Kinkel says consistency is key to maintaining her daily eating routine all while enjoying a glass of wine at night. 'Food should be simple and fresh. I am not an extreme person in any sense of the word, and my eating habits reflect that approach. **BREAKFAST** includes two (very boring) boiled eggs due to morning time constraint to get Maya to school and myself to work by 8:30am. **LUNCH** is usually my least eventful meal of the day, but I pick something simple like avocado and crackers, as I'm not a fan of left-overs. **DINNER** is my favourite meal. We braai at least twice a week, and there are always proteins such as salmon, chicken or meat with fresh veggies and a salad. I splurge when I feel like it and snack on biltong, which is a staple in my diet. Oh, yes, and more recently, Kale chips. I would eat a salty snack over a sweet one any day. Exercising entails road running of between five to 10 kilometres three times a week, but I also take Pump classes. My fitness levels are great but I cannot do a push-up to save my life!'



TSHOLOFELO DIKOBÉ, FASHION CURATOR

Tsholofelo Dikobe, a Botswana-based fashion artist, stylist and curator for *The Voice*, is also a firm believer in snacking, and that the only constant in life is change (even when it comes to eating). 'Food should be varied. My mother taught me to keep my meals varied, and that changing up my diet is an essential part of healthy eating. **BREAKFAST** is a quick and light meal of cornflakes or high-fibre, low-sugar cereals. Sometime I even indulge in a sandwich or hake fillet! **LUNCH** is usually a mandarin chicken pasta salad or a tuna pan bagnat (a sandwich typical of the south east region of France). **DINNER** includes a grilled chicken breast with a vegetable pasta salad on the side. I splurge when I am stressed or off-loading from a long day's work. I typically enjoy icy desserts such as frozen yoghurt, a Toblerone milkshake, or ice-cream, and snack on a fruit salad or something that will give me an energy boost, like an energy bar or, my favourite, bananas. Exercising entails a well-rounded mix of stretching, strength training and cardio.'



JESSICA LEIGH BUCHANAN, MODEL

Known for her freckles and the famous gap between her teeth, model Jessica Leigh Buchanan is never without her green juice. Between travelling and juicing, she indulges in spicy food at Vintage India and Jamaica Me Crazy in Cape Town. 'Food should be healthy and balanced. What you put inside your body will show on the outside. **BREAKFAST** includes a big bowl of granola and fruit with a cup of coffee, of course. **LUNCH** is usually a smoothie and wrap from my favourite juice and food bar, Orchard on Long. **DINNER** is grilled stuffed mushroom and chicken, a recent favourite, or a lentil curry. I splurge when I'm on a date – my favourite is a good curry or Mexican tapas, and snack on grapes, oat bars, cold-pressed juices (yes, juices are my staple) and biltong. Exercising entails high-intensity yoga and jogging.' □



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THE LIFESTYLE

IN THE MIX

When two contrasting styles merge, the result is an eclectic yet inspiring space to call home





Moving from a slick, contemporary space in Sydney into a 1930s house in Clontarf might seem like a step back for many, but for Jacqui and Eric Fink it was just what was needed to merge their contrasting décor tastes for their growing family

text and production DAVID HARRISON

photography MICHAEL WEE

HOME

ECLECTIC

Opposite: The dining table is an old French farmhouse style in oak, surrounded by Philippe Starck Ghost chairs for Kartell; Below: The rug on the floor is a Jacqui Fink original; Bottom: The owl painting is by Joshua Yeldham



When you enter Jacqui and Eric Fink's home you are faced with something so eclectic it makes you smile. It's a home, where kids flourish, and creativity is welcomed. The interior of the house provides a simple, neutral backdrop for the couple's diverse tastes in art and objects – with antiques and distressed painted furniture existing side by side, with slick items from contemporary furniture companies like Kartell, Cassina and Zanotta. 'Blending old and new has been a consistent theme in our lives. It's not carefully planned, we just gather things we love and push them together. Luckily it seems to work... most of the time,' notes Eric.

But it wasn't always the case. 'When we first moved to Sydney from Queensland, we drove around Clontarf quite a bit, fantasising about our dream home by the water. I guess Clontarf has always been a special place for us, but ultimately, while we were young and childless the draw of the city lifestyle in Woollahra was just too great,' says Jacqui. Two children later, and after an unsuccessful stint in a boat access only house at Elvira Bay, on the shores of Pittwater, Jacqui and Eric moved back to Woollahra, this time with a renovations project in sight.



The 'Madeleine Garden' portrait by Cherry Hood decorates the wall beautifully



They bought a lovely old double-fronted sandstone cottage but engaged Sydney architect Ian Moore to create the optimal mix of old world charm and minimalist contemporary spaces. 'We really enjoyed living in a beautifully elegant, architect designed space but by the time our third child, Elodie, was born a few years later, we were running out of space again. On top of this, our rambunctious kids were taking their toll on the pristine surfaces. We decided to leave the poor little house before we ruined it completely,' says Jacqui.

When they first saw the Clontarf house online they thought it was a bit of an ugly duckling, but upon inspecting the garden Jacqui was reminded of her childhood in Murwillumbah, up near Tweed Heads on the New South Wales / Queensland border. 'We were both bowled over by the views of middle harbour, and because Clontarf is sort of a halfway house between Woollahra and Palm Beach, we felt we could finally get the best of both worlds,' adds Jacqui.

So far, modernising the house has been confined to a few coats of white paint on the walls and floor to freshen it up, open it up visually, and tone down some of its more 'interesting' previous alterations.

To illustrate the unique way in which their eclectic belongings come together, a portrait of a young lady by highly regarded French artist Joseph-Désiré Court, (who painted for the court of King Louis Philippe I) graces the entrance vestibule, right next to an old red painted chair of no particular pedigree. While they are not naturally drawn to opulent antiques they have succumbed over the years to some amazing pieces courtesy of Eric's father – a French antiques dealer. Both Jacqui and Eric possess a unique artistic spirit, which is reflected in the range of art they have collected over the years. During their time in Woollahra they bought the work of Cherry Hood, David Bromley, Matthew Rogers and Joshua Yeldham. Each is a wonderful, bold example of the artists' work and helps give the house its distinct character. The charm is in the contrasts of antique and modern, high-end and low-end, sharp and dishevelled.

The rooms have also taken on signature looks courtesy of Jacqui's knitted creations. At any one time their cat, Chutney, can be spotted lying in a patch of sun on a soft wool mat, or the ancient Jack Russell, Hugo, easing his arthritic joints on a generous throw. Jacqui started producing unique

knitted goods in 2010 and eventually worked up the courage to start her own home wares label, Little Dandelion, in 2012. 'I love the softness of unspun wool and the super chunky texture I can get by using oversized needles. Each piece has its own personality and thankfully people are responding to it positively,' observes Jacqui, who hopes to grow the brand by creating knitted objects in all sorts of materials, including linen and rope – sometimes incorporating the special talents of friends Pepa and Karen from Shibori Textiles, or stylist, Lara Hutton, who creates ceramic vessels.

The house has a relaxed vibe that encourages creativity, and Jacqui admits that it is old

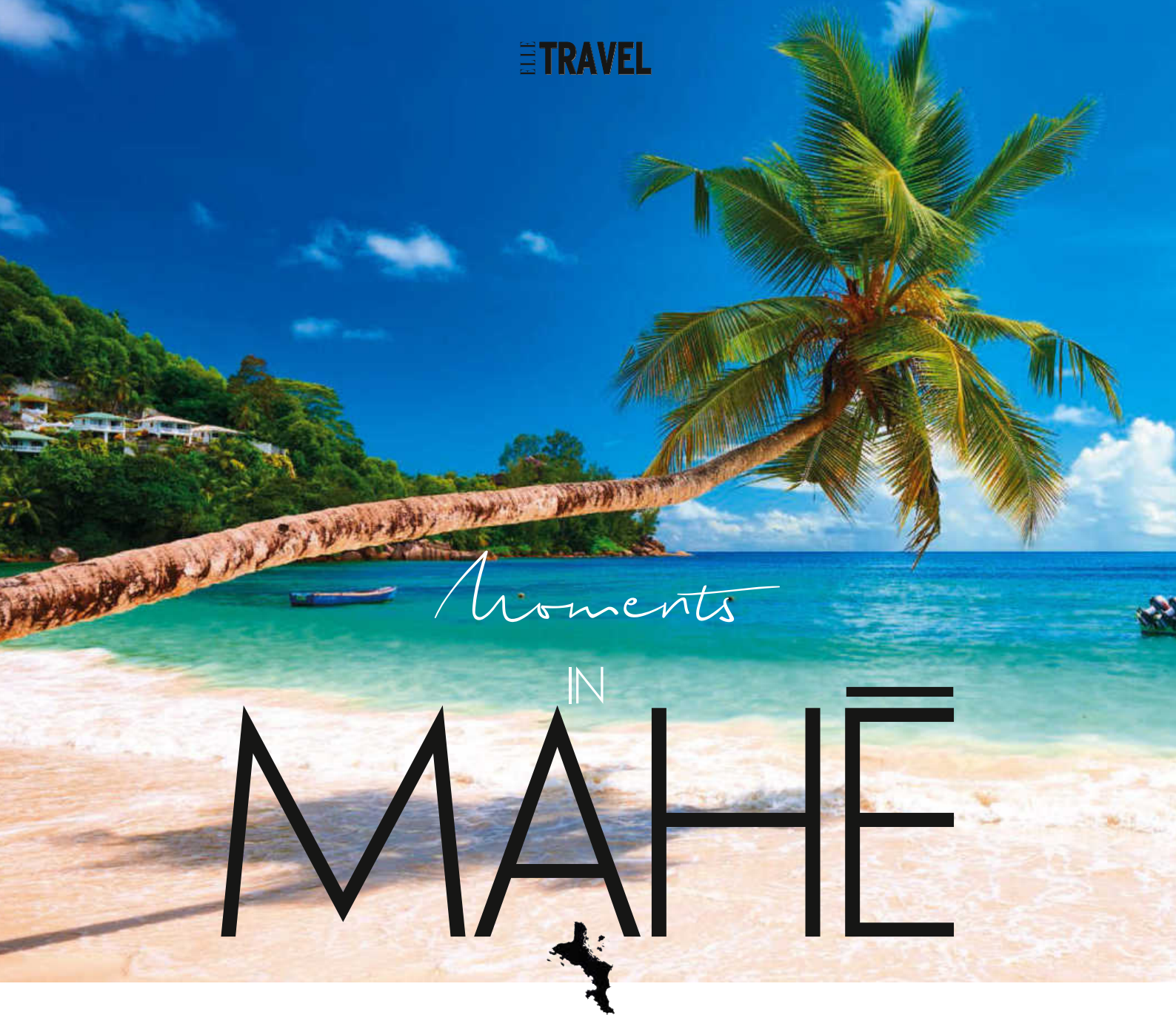
and a bit knocked about but thankfully it's pretty indestructible. 'This is perfect for our three young kids who love to make cubbies all over the place. It's great not to feel too precious about the house and stifle their fun. In time we would love to do something with big, beautiful ideas again... We just have to win the Lotto first!' □



Above: Jacqui and Eric Fink met as university students; Above right: The couple bought the rustic bedside table from industrial store Dock One; Right: Jacqui's label, 'Little Dandelion' printed on canvas rolls



‘This is perfect for our three young kids who love to make cubbies all over the place. It’s great not to feel too precious about the house and stifle their fun’



Moments IN MAHÉ

4.6167° S, 55.4500° E

As a travel and wellness writer who lived in Mahé for 10 months, *Lynette Botha* got to sample her fair share of luxury spa resorts

It's that time of the year where you need to pack away your laptop, put down your cellphone, and disconnect all your electronics. In a day and age that sees us constantly connected, over-worked, and strung out, the biggest luxury we have is time to ourselves... and if that happens to be spent in an idyllic location like Mahé, Seychelles, a more blissful situation would be hard to come by. Majestic Mahé is the main island of the Seychelles archipelago, which is made up of 115 island outcrops, spread far apart in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean.

Mountainous and covered in lush vegetation, with some of the most paradisiacal views in the world, Mahé is also well-known as a healing destination – from the therapeutic sea water to the fresh mountain air, and the abundance of superfoods that grow naturally all over the island. If a time-out is what you need, and wellness and recharging are on your priority list, splurging on a week in the Seychelles will be money well spent. Having lived there for 10 months, I was lucky enough to experience some of the world's best resorts, each unique in its offering. These are some of my favourites...

Located on the north of the island is **THE SAVOY RESORT & SPA**, Mahé's tallest hotel, which is situated on the shore of the island's most popular beach, Beau Vallon. While this is an extremely busy and vibey area, once in the confines of the resort property, the outside hustle and bustle is shut away and an island oasis is all that awaits. It has the largest hotel pool on the island, perfect to while away the hot days in, and the spa is a vast space of 5 800m², featuring nine luxurious treatment suites, a state-of-the-art Matrix gym with an adjoining Pilates and yoga pavilion, wet facilities that include Russian Banya (only available at The Savoy Spa in Seychelles), an ice fountain, a hammam, experience showers with aromatherapy, a spa swimming pool (with a cascading waterfall and hydro-massage pool), and more. *savoy.sc*

INSIDE INFO: The deep baths and generous amount of complimentary Molton Brown amenities in each suite mean chilling in your room is a definite. If you have kids-in-tow, they'll adore the welcome bag and T-shirt, the expansive kids' club and the complimentary pool toys.

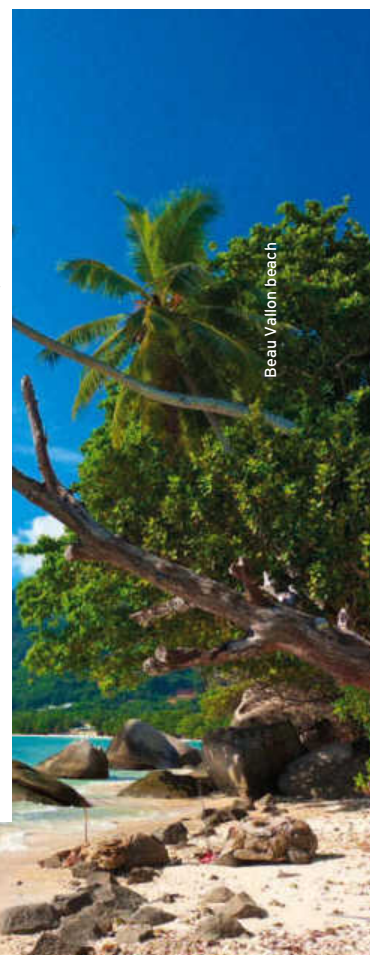
IN THE AREA: Beau Vallon is about a 10-minute drive from the Victoria CBD; there you will find various restaurants, like the landmark Marie Antoinette, which serves authentic Creole cuisine (fruit bat, anyone?). Pop into Kankan, local fashion designer Karine du Pouy's upmarket boutique that stocks her clothing, as well as imported jewellery and homeware. Stop by the national botanical gardens too, and if you have time, the charming Natural History Museum is worth a visit.



The Savoy Resort & Spa

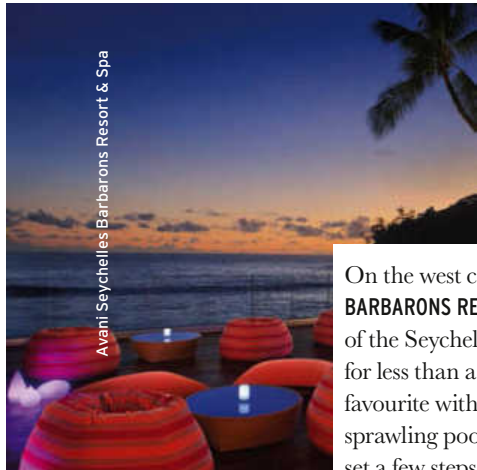


The Savoy Resort & Spa



Beau Vallon beach

Avani Seychelles Barbarons Resort & Spa



On the west coast lies **AVANI SEYCHELLES BARBARONS RESORT & SPA**, which is one of the Seychelles' newest resorts, open for less than a year, and already a firm favourite with locals and visitors. The sprawling pool, an enticing body of water, set a few steps back from the beach, is the focal point of the resort and the hub from which everything else stems. The spa is set away from the main public areas, in its own tranquil garden, with a separate spa pool. The spa's philosophy is simple – it's important to make time for well-deserved pampering – and the menu is made up of treatments to boost, calm, balance, or purify, depending on your preferences and what you'd like to achieve from your wellness experience. Treatments are performed in one of three single rooms, or a double treatment room, complete with its own sundeck and steam ritual. Food and dining are also top priority at AVANI, with two restaurants to choose from. To add a different element to your well-deserved holiday, cooking courses are also available with the talented and friendly Chef Prajak Pokaboot.

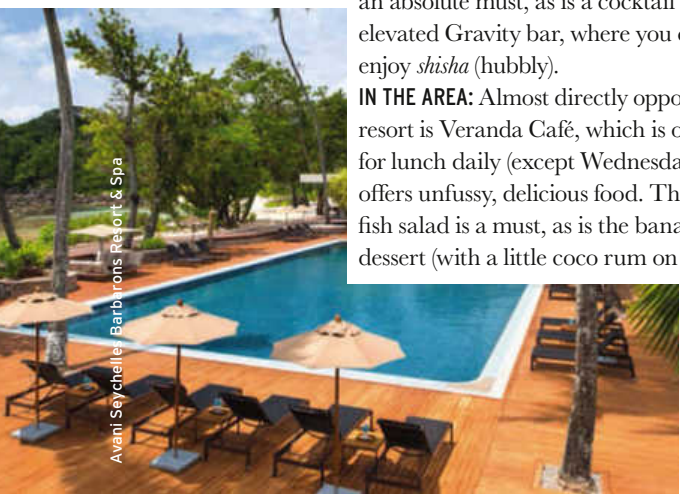
avanihotels.com/seychelles-barbarons

INSIDE INFO: Morning and evening walks on the long stretch of beach are an absolute must, as is a cocktail at the elevated Gravity bar, where you can also enjoy *shisha* (hubbly).

IN THE AREA: Almost directly opposite the resort is Veranda Café, which is open for lunch daily (except Wednesdays) and offers unfussy, delicious food. The smoked fish salad is a must, as is the banana cake dessert (with a little coco rum on the side).



Avani Seychelles Barbarons Resort & Spa



The Banyan Tree name is synonymous with luxury the world over, and **BANYAN TREE SEYCHELLES** lives up to that acclaim, although in a barefoot kind of way. This sanctuary is nestled in the lush hillside and high above one of the most popular beaches in the Seychelles, Anse Intendance. The spa is one of the top wellness destinations in the archipelago, offering indulgent treatments, from Korean Rain Mist Therapy and Ayurvedic Treatment packages, to a hair spa. All the therapists at the spa are trained at the Banyan Tree Spa Academy in Phuket, Thailand, a dedicated training facility that ensures high quality service and consistency, no matter which Banyan Tree property you holiday at in the world, with a 'high-touch, low-tech' philosophy that celebrates human touch, and the use of natural (mostly local) ingredients. A little known fact about the resort is that it used to be the site of British actor Peter Sellers and Beatles member George Harrison's island hideaway!

banyantree.com/em-seychelles

INSIDE INFO: If you enjoy a glass of bubbly in the morning (while on holiday), you will be happy to know that this is included as part of your daily breakfast buffet. The beachfront pool villas are the best, with a private veranda and swimming pool, a dipping pool with water jets and submerged couple seat, and direct access to the beach from your suite.



TRAVEL TIPS

Best time to visit: Weather is warm all year round, even during the rainy season in January/February. While there are heavy downpours during this period, rain never lasts longer than a few hours, and the temperature is still beautifully balmy. April/May and October/November are the best times for snorkelling and diving, as visibility is best – reaching up to 30 metres at times. The best time for surfing is between May and September. **Get there:** Air Seychelles flies directly from Johannesburg three times a week.



Banyan Tree Seychelles



Anse Intendance beach



Four Seasons Resort Seychelles

With one of the finest views in all of Mahé, the location of the **FOUR SEASONS RESORT** is unmatched in the Seychelles. Cocooned by lush greenery, and with views out over the pristine waters of Petite Anse, the resort offers an island retreat like no other. The hilltop spa is exquisite and you will literally feel your stress and fatigue slowly drift away as you step inside. With a wide range of beauty and wellness offerings – from myriad facial and body treatments, to signature bath rituals, and a night spa menu – there is an indulgent menu to fix (almost) any ailment. And there's even a treatment menu for the little ones for the Kids' Spa. Private yoga sessions can be arranged and personalised to suit all levels, from introductory exploration to advanced practice, starting with a brisk walk and including Hatha postures on a stand up paddleboard (SUP). The Vaishaly Experience, exclusive to the resort, is a unique treatment that incorporates massage and healing craniosacral therapy techniques, focusing on the neck, shoulders, scalp, and face to gently release tension, banish stress and restore balance and is a must-try experience.

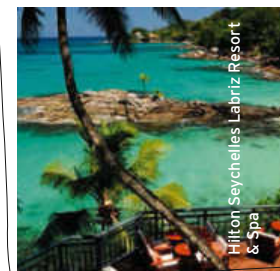
fourseasons.com/seychelles

INSIDE INFO: Every villa has its own private rim-flow pool, and if you're travelling with children, a removable wooden fence is put up so that the kids do not have direct access. The sunken baths are big enough for two, with incredible views. The swing on the beach is the best seat in the house, and if you like live music, book over a weekend to enjoy local tunes with your dinner.

IN THE AREA: The resort is located close to many local restaurants and art galleries, as well as beautiful Baie Lazare beach, where you can book a stand-up paddleboard (SUP) or surf lesson with iSurf Seychelles.

While a little further afield (by boat) from Mahé, **BEACHCOMBER SAINTE ANNE RESORT & SPA** and **HILTON SEYCHELLES LABRIZ RESORT & SPA** are wellness resorts worth considering too. Located on Sainte Anne Island and Silhouette Island respectively, both are the sole resorts on each island. Beachcomber Sainte Anne is home to the only Clarins Spa in the Seychelles, and Hilton Labriz recently won the prestigious Seychelles Leading Spa Resort Award at the World Travel Awards 2015.

beachcomber-hotels.com/sainte-anne-resort-spa
hilton.com/mahe



Hilton Seychelles Labriz Resort & Spa

BUDGET SEYCHELLES

If a luxury resort stay is out of the question, but wellness is still on the agenda, **The Station Seychelles** is a retreat hotel that offers on-site holistic treatments, wellbeing packages, yoga and meditation, and a range of spa treatments.

thestationseychelles.com

Le Niol Health Resort is another hidden Mahé gem that provides self-catering accommodation and Ayurvedic treatments at affordable rates.

leniolhealthresort.com



GO ONLINE
for more not-to-be-missed adventures in the Seychelles



Lynette

TRAVEL TIPS

Currency: The Seychelles Rupee is almost the same value as the Rand currently (SR1.00 = R1.10); Euros and Dollars are widely accepted, as are MasterCard and Visa. **Car rentals:** Prices vary between R450 – R600 per day, depending on the duration of your stay. **Don't forget to pack:** sun cream, mosquito repellent, adaptors (British three-pin plugs are standard), books and magazines (reading material is limited), medication, batteries. It's best not to drink the local water – bottled water is sold everywhere.

A HEARTY meal

Famous for its croissants, artisan sourdough breads, and the *must-taste doughssant*, Cape Town's *Jason Bakery* serves other hearty meals perfect for the festive season

SLICED PORK BELLY, STICKY COCONUT RICE, AND ASIAN APPLE & CUCUMBER SALAD WITH CHILLI & LIME DRESSING

Serves 4

@CaptainBreadZA

@CaptainBreadZA



Who is Jason?

From his early days as a trainee chef, to uncovering a passion for baking artisanal bread, Jason Lilley has explored varied kitchens and gained incredible insight into what people love to eat. The delectable menu at Jason Bakery is all the proof you need about just how much good food means to him.

CURED, SMOKED, BRAISED PORK BELLY

CURING SPICE

INGREDIENTS

500g coarse salt
250g white sugar
20 fennel seeds
20g whole black peppercorns
20g whole white peppercorns
5g whole cloves
10g cinnamon sticks
10g star anise

METHOD

Mix all the ingredients together. Place in an airtight container, and store until needed.

CURING THE PORK

INGREDIENTS

800g slab of pork belly
½ cup curing rub

METHOD

Rub the pork belly on both sides with the curing spice. Place in a glass container, cover with cling film, and refrigerate overnight.

SMOKING THE PORK

METHOD

Rinse the cured pork belly under cold water and pat dry with a kitchen towel. Set up the smoker to 180°C and smoke the belly for 1.5 minutes.

BRAISING THE PORK

INGREDIENTS

½ onion
1 head garlic, halved
2 carrots, peeled, cut into chunks
2 leeks, washed, cut into chunks
3 celery stalks, cut into chunks
10 whole peppercorns
3 bay leaves

METHOD

Place all the ingredients in a large casserole dish. Top with the pork belly and cover with water. Cover with a lid and place in a pre-heated oven at 90°C for four hours. Remove the pork belly and allow it to cool outside of the fridge. Once cooled refrigerate until it is needed.

HOISIN BBQ SAUCE

INGREDIENTS

1 cup Hoisin sauce
1/3 cup soy sauce
1/4 cup honey
1/4 cup rice wine vinegar
1/2t sesame oil
1/4t Five Spice

METHOD

Mix all the ingredients in a heavy-base saucepan. Bring to the boil and immediately turn the heat down to a simmer for five minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to cool before using it. Keep at room temperature for serving.

STICKY COCONUT RICE

INGREDIENTS

2 cups Jasmine rice, rinsed
2 cups water
2 tins coconut milk
Pinch of sea salt
60g shaved coconut, lightly toasted

METHOD

Place all the ingredients into a heavy-base pot, and bring to the boil. Turn the heat down and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes. The rice should just be on the softer side of *al dente* with a sticky consistency. Remove from the heat and let it stand for 10 minutes. Fold in the lightly toasted coconut.

ASIAN APPLE & CUCUMBER SALAD

INGREDIENTS

80g Granny Smith apples, cut into match sticks

40g broccoli, blanched
16ea fine green beans, blanched, cut into three strips
1/2 cucumber shaved
Handful of fresh coriander, picked
Handful of Tatsoi (rosette bok choy)
2 radishes, finely sliced

METHOD

Toss all the ingredients in a large mixing bowl.

CHILI & LIME DRESSING

INGREDIENTS

5 limes juiced
1T brown sugar
1/2t dried chilli flakes
1/2t sesame oil
1/2t garlic, finely grated
1/2t ginger, finely grated
4t fish oil
1/2 cup olive oil blend

METHOD

Place all the ingredients in a mixing bowl and, using a whisk, thoroughly mix until combined. Place in the refrigerator until it is needed.

GARNISH

2 green onions (scallions), cut on the bias for garnish
Handful cashew nuts, toasted and chopped

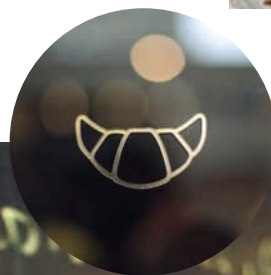
PLATING

Slice the pork belly into 16 equal slices.
Heat up a heavy-base frying pan and sear the pork belly on all sides until crispy.
Dress your salad with the dressing and arrange on a plate. Warm up the rice in a saucepan with a splash of water and place next to the salad.
Place four pork belly slices on the rice of each plate and top with the BBQ Hoisin sauce.
Garnish with the green onions and toasted cashew nuts.



JASON'S TOP 3 FOOD INSTAGRAMMERS

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HOW TO

DINE WITH CHAMPAGNE

(TIP: A FLUTE OR A COUPE WILL DO, AND YOU SHOULD DRINK IT ALL-YEAR LONG)

Champagne season is here, but the indulgent drink can and should be enjoyed throughout the year, says *Veuve Clicquot Cellar Master, Dominique Demarville*

CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES

Coco Chanel said: 'I only drink champagne on two occasions, when I am in love and when I am not.' Demarville says that the drink traditionally associated with special occasions can, and should, be enjoyed any time of the year. 'Life is to be celebrated, and champagne is a celebratory drink.'



SAY CHEESE

There's long been a love affair between cheese and wine, but the question is: which cheese goes best with champagne? The more vintage your champagne, the stronger your cheese choice needs to be. However, Parmigiano tops the list.



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ON THE MENU

The invites are out, your outfit is picked, and your choice of bubbly is in hand, so what's on the menu, and what goes best with champagne? Depending on your palate, champagne can be served with almost every dish - from canapés to a four-course meal, seafood, and, of course, dessert.

CHAMPAGNE ETIQUETTE

So how to best serve the bubbly? Tradition would have us believe that the slender and elongated flute is its perfect match, however the deco-inspired coupe scores high marks amongst champagne drinkers, but which is it? A flute is always best, but here's the twist, it's perfectly acceptable to pour champagne into a coupe, and when pairing it with a seafood dish, a simple white wine glass will do.



RICH HISTORY

Founded in 1772 in Reims, France, what began as a wine merchant company, evolved into a trailblazing conglomerate thanks to one of the first true businesswomen in the world, the audacious Barbe-Nicole Ponsardin. Madame Clicquot revolutionised the champagne industry, understood luxury and what defined it. The Maison is recognised for its meticulous attention to blends using only the finest ingredients that make up its world-renowned selection of champagne. □



THE PERFECT PAIR

South Africans usually enjoy Rosé with dessert but changing things up is just what your dining experience requires. Pair it with shellfish, smoked salmon and even caviar. Ham, from Italy and Spain, comes highly recommended for its richer flavour, while red meat, like lamb or beef, teams well with Rosé.



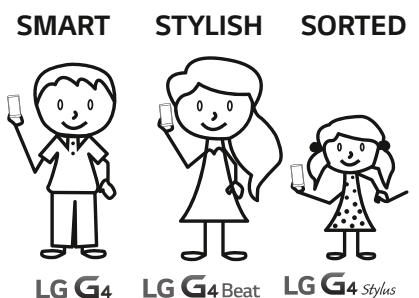
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by THE GALACTIC GOGO

Sagittarius

November 23 – December 22

Early December can't help but reflect your impulse to live large. That curious mind has many opportunities to expand, especially if it advances career and reputation. It's rarely a surprise when travel appears on our Wanderer's agenda.

CAPRICORN

December 23 – January 20

What better place for our Goat than a silly season in the southern hemisphere? With solar power on your side and a mind to be industrious, you're ready for action and stirred to enjoy exploring a friendship with potential benefits.

AQUARIUS

January 21 – February 18

When our Visionary's ruling planet stations directly on Boxing Day, the chaotic nature of the past six months will begin to take shape, slowly but surely, introducing opportunities further afield – not to mention surprises closer to home.

PISCES

February 19 – March 20

With Mars in Libra fuelling bedroom antics this silly season, playing fair can take on any number of provocative scenarios. In fact, taking turns and role-playing could make the atmosphere enjoyably steamy. It all depends on how our Mermaid writes the script.

ARIES

March 21 – April 20

Keeping things honest, at a time of year when the pressure is on for everybody to put on a happy face, might best be accomplished if Ram remembers to communicate with a diplomatic but decisive, 'Darling, I'll carry my own baggage, thank you very much' response.

TAURUS

April 21 – May 21

Nobody's heart is truly focused on cranking out work product as the year winds to a close, least of all our Bull. With most folks anxious for the holiday season to begin, partnering up may be the most efficient and pleasurable way to get the job done.



Raised in a theatre-loving home, and cutting her teeth on Shakespeare, this Sagittarian's creative energy and breadth of experience are nothing short of staggering. With each passing decade she manages to prove to the film industry that older women do indeed belong on the big screen. Many happy returns to Dame Judi Dench.

GEMINI

May 22 – June 21

Long summer days under African skies are enough to fuel our Butterfly's desire for romance, in the company of someone who has serious intentions – of course! A secret workplace admirer may be waiting for you to flutter those pretty wings in recognition.

CANCER

June 22 – July 23

When December's full Moon in Cancer collides with the busiest family time of the year, you'll be wearing both a bikini and your heart on your sleeve. Not enough emotion for you, Moonchild? Venus in Scorpio could be stirring up one hot holiday romance!

LEO

July 24 – August 23

Finding sanity in a houseful of boisterous children who have inflated holiday expectations requires our Lioness to organise an adventure for the pride. The great outdoors is a perfect container for big energy. Just build in some roam-free time for yourself.

VIRGO

August 24 – September 23

The road to hell is paved with... How does that old saying go? Virgo's heartfelt intention is to enjoy the holidays with family and friends, but workplace calendars are rarely in synch with personal needs. Relax when you can, but prepare to work from home.

LIBRA

September 24 – October 23

With Venus activating your money sector, our Libra might offset the financial drain of the festive season by generating a second income. Other enterprising souls rent out their homes to holiday-makers to fund their own getaways. Why not you?

SCORPIO

October 24 – November 22

The need for some R&R and a bit of solitude is matched only by Phoenix's desire for social admiration over the festive season. Entertaining friends and family need not cost you the Moon, if you keep a lid on the flow of alcohol. Just sayin'. □

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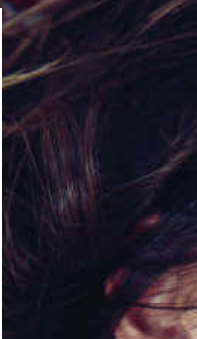
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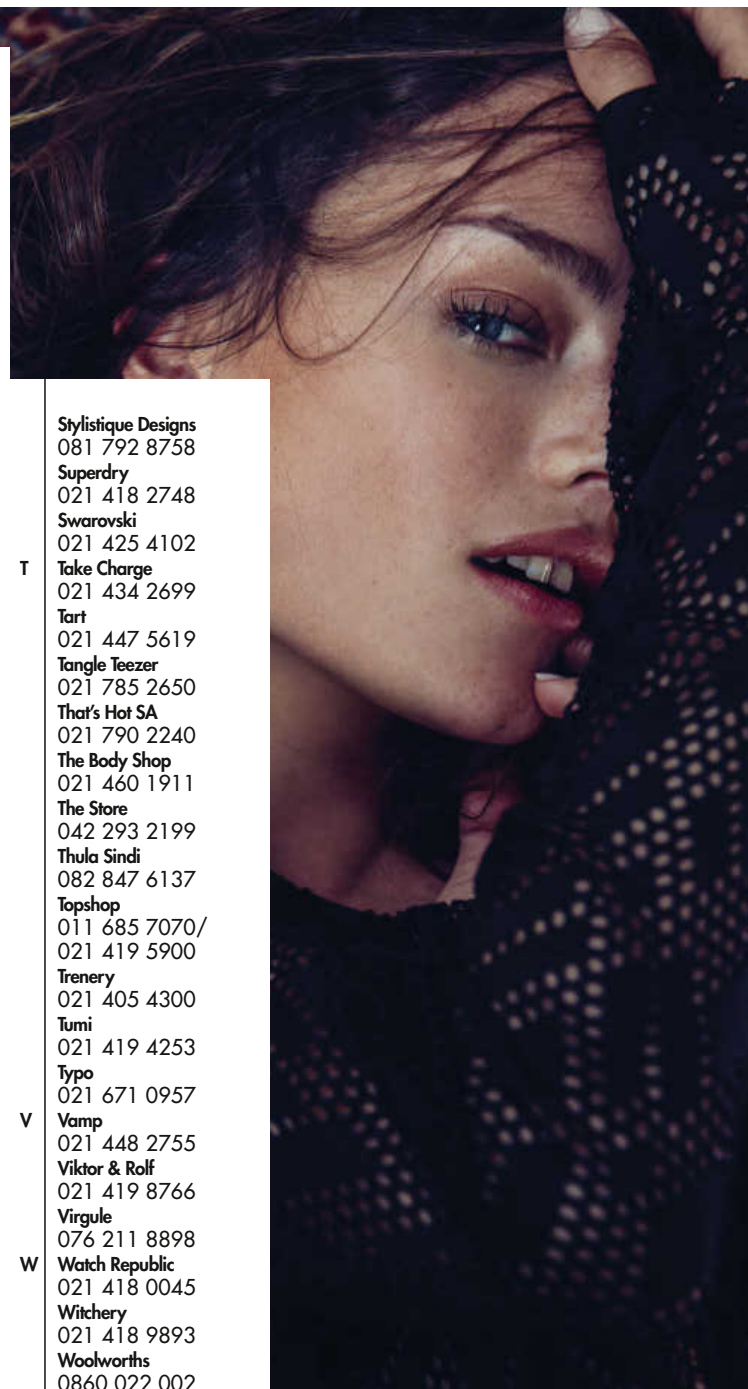
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THE SONGS WE SING OF OURSELVES

For every defining moment in our lives, there's a song that has served as companion, writes *Danielle Bowler*

✉ @daniellebowler

On the 30-minute commute from a tiny beach town to a school in the city, there was one certainty: as the radio blared out an endless stream of sounds, I would, at some point, shout: 'that's my song.' My father, having heard this phrase countless times, attached to countless songs, would roll his eyes and respond: 'every song is your song.'

Years later, sitting in the corner of a London recording studio, I recalled this exchange as I paged through *American Music*, a book by renowned photographer Annie Leibovitz and musician Patti Smith. The memory was triggered by a statement Smith made in the book's foreword: 'We are all Walt Whitman. We all sing of ourselves. The songs we create, which address our own condition, will ultimately sing of another. And another.'

In Whitman's popular poem, *Song of Myself*, he writes: 'I celebrate myself / and sing myself.' What Patti Smith captured, though, was the universal nature of music – how it stands for so much more than the individual experience. As songwriters draw on their own lives, they simultaneously manage to speak to our own situations, feelings and experiences. Some songs feel like they were written just for us, and speak directly to what we are going through at a particular moment. Music can provide us with snapshots of who and where we are at different points in our lives, in a way that nothing else can replicate.

Adele captured the sound of a break-up in *21*. Her experience resonated with millions of people who were acutely familiar with the many textures of heartbreak. Beyoncé's ****Flawless*, which samples Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's We Should All Be Feminists TEDx talk, reignited and generated difficult and important conversations about what it means to be a feminist today, while Kendrick Lamar's *To Pimp A Butterfly* comes at a time when

we are questioning the state of democracy in light of ongoing police brutality, and the devaluation of black lives in America and beyond.

Whether overtly political or extremely personal, or a combination of both, musicians sing songs that sometimes dare us to be braver, pull us out of our darkest moments, celebrate our successes, or push us to confront ourselves, and ask questions about who we are, what we want, and the nature of the world that we live in.

Patti Smith was right, we are all Walt Whitman, even those of us who are not musicians. We sing songs of ourselves in different ways – it be the way that we speak of and to ourselves, or how we project that to the world in many different ways, and communicate our lives and experiences.

And as the year draws to a close, many of us are trying to take stock of what the past 12 months have meant for our lives, before the inevitable New Year's resolutions cycle around again. As we try to make sense of it all, what is the song that we sing of ourselves? If you had to take a snapshot of your life right now, in song form, what would it sound like?

Each December comes with its summer anthem. We wait for it to reveal itself, whether climbing to the top of the charts, heard from passing cars (on repeat), turned up at parties on balmy nights, serving as the soundtrack to summer flings, or moments spent with loved ones. As I turn up Shekinah Donnell and Kyle Deusch's *Back to the Beach*, and make the journey back to my small, beach town for the holidays, I will be asking myself about the song that I sing of myself, and attempting to unpack all the complex answers to that question. I'm hoping the answer will be Lianne La Havas' *Unstoppable*, because 2016 brings new possibilities, challenges and adventures, and the potential to sing new, different songs of ourselves. □

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